A

VOYAGE

TO THE

ISLAND of MAURITIUS,

(Or, ISLE OF FRANCE)

THE

ISLE of BOURBON,

THE

CAPE of GOOD-HOPE, &c.

With Observations and Reflections upon Nature, and Mankind.

By a FRENCH OFFICER.

Homo ſum; humani nihil a me alienum puto. TER.

TRANSLATED from the FRENCH

BY JOHN PARISH.

LONDON:

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MDCCLXXV.

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TO THE

MOST NOBLE

THE

MARQUIS OF GRANBY.

MY LORD,

THE Permiſſion I have obtained of inſcribing this Tranſlation to your Lordſhip, affords me a happy Opportunity of expreſſing my grateful reſpect to the Memory of your truly NOBLE FATHER, and my EXCELLENT PATRON---'tis in vain for me to attempt his Panegyric: All I could ſay, would be but as the feeble Eccho of a Nation's Voice, loud raiſed in Honour of his Virtues. The Taſk would alſo be a painful one: For while I wrote, Sorrow would be excited that ſo much Worth were loſt to his COUNTRY, to his FAMILY, and to *me*.

DEDICATION.

Having declined to ſpeak of your Father's Virtues, I cannot my Lord, with propriety enumerate Your's: But thus far I may ſay, and with truth; that at ſo early a period of Life, they add Luſtre to the high Rank you ſupport.

Your Lordſhip's Patronage is more than a Compenſation to the Author, for my inability to do Juſtice to his Work, and reflects an Honour upon me, of which I am very truly ſenſible.

I am, with the moſt perfect Reſpect,

MY LORD,

YOUR LORDSHIP's

moſt devoted and
moſt obedient
humble Servant,

June 1, 1775.

JOHN PARISH.

The TRANSLATOR's

PREFACE.

THE Reader is here preſented with a Tranſlation of a Work, which the late Doctor Goldſmith admired for the accuracy and ingenuity of its Obſervations, and for the Spirit of Benevolence and Philantrohpy which breathes through the whole. He wiſhed it to be done into Engliſh, and had he lived, his correcting Hand would have rendered the Tranſlation more worthy of the Author and of the Fublic favour, than in the ſtate, in which it is now ſubmitted it to their Candour.

The Syſtem of Vegetation contained in the three laſt Letters, is written in the Ori-

ginal as a Dialogue: In its preſent form, it is much ſhorter, and yet contains the meaning theAuthor would convey. A long Table of Sea Terms is omitted, as alſo another very long one of Contents, and a conſiderable Part of the Journal from Port l'Orient to the Iſle of France, which appeared rather unintereſting. For the ſame Reaſon, and becauſe of the difficulties attending the Tranſlating of the Conchyology, which Science indeed the Author profeſſes himſelf very little acquainted with, the Deſcription of that Part of the Natural Hiſtory is alſo omitted. By this means the Tranſlation is reduced to one half the Bulk and Price of the Original.

Deſirous to give the Reader every Information relative to an Iſland which (to ſay no more of it) has been the Object of the particular Attention of two Men ſo ingenious and ſo able as the Abbè de la Caille, and our Author; the Tranſlator begs Leave to inſert the following Extract from a late Publication, the Author of which, Dr. Campbell, ſpeaking of the Iſle of France, ſays, " incredible " as it may ſeem, yet it is certainly Matter of " Fact, that in the ſpace of five Years he (*Mon-*

" *ſieur de la Bourdonnais*) rendered this Country
" a *Paradiſe*, that had been a Deſart for five
" thouſand, and this in ſpite of the Inhabi-
" tants, and of the Company, who being
" originally prejudiced by them, behaved
" ill to him at his Return. He ſoon made
" the Cardinal de Fleury, however, ſenſible
" of the true ſtate of things, and compelled
" the Company to acknowledge, though they
" did not reward, his Services. He after-
" wards returned, as all the World knows,
" into the Indies, and perfected the Work he
" had begun; and to him it is owing that
" *the Iſle of France is at preſent one of the*
" *fineſt, as it was always one of the moſt*
" *Important and Improveable ſpots upon the*
" *Globe.*"

THE

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THESE letters were written to my friends during my voyage. After my return, I put them in order and printed them, as a public teſtimony of my acknowledgement of the good offices I had received.

THE plan I have adopted is this; having given an account of the plants and animals natural to each country, and of the ſoil in it's unimproved ſtate, I then ſpeak of the characters and manners of the inhabitants.

The AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

WHAT I have ſaid, will perhaps be deemed a ſatire, but I can ſay with truth, that in ſpeaking of men, I have ſpoken of their good actions with alacrity, and of their faults with candor.

AFTER ſpeaking of the Coloniſts, I enter upon a detail of the vegetables and animals with which they have peopled the country. The induſtry, the arts, and the commerce of theſe countries are all included in agriculture. It ſhould ſeem that this art, ſo ſimple, would be productive of the moſt amiable manners; but the life led by the people of the Iſle of France, is far from a primitive one.

DEATH has ſnatched from us Monſieur de Tolbach, Governor of the Cape, who had been very obliging to me. If the place allotted him in theſe memoirs cannot now ſerve as acknowledgements, it may at leaſt be an uſeful example of conduct to thoſe Frenchmen who may be appointed governors in India. If from my account, they may be induced to imitate his virtues, I ſhall then indeed do honour to them.

I AM next to apologize for having treated of ſome ſubjects that I am a ſtranger to. I have written upon plants and animals, but I am not a Naturaliſt. Natural Hiſtory is not ſhut up in libraries; it has rather

ther ſeemed to me, a volume, to be read by the whole world. I have traced through the whole, the moſt evident proofs of a providence; and I have treated it, not as a ſyſtem that is pleaſing to my fancy, but as a ſentiment with which my heart is filled.

I SHALL at leaſt, I think, have been of uſe to mankind, if the faint ſketch I have given of the miſerable lot of the Negroe ſlaves, ſhould ſave them from one ſtroke of the whip; and if the Europeans who ſo loudly exclaim againſt tyranny, and among whom are compoſed ſuch beautiful treatiſes of morality, may hereby be induced to ceaſe being in India the moſt barbarous of all tyrants.

I SHALL think I have done ſervice to my country, if I prevent but one ſingle man of worth from quitting it, and if I have determined him to cultivate one additional acre in ſome heath that yet never has felt the plough.

To be ſenſible of this love for his country, a man muſt firſt quit it. I am attached to mine, although neither by my fortune, nor the rank I hold in it: but the place where I firſt ſaw the light, is dear to me: There, I have felt, have loved, have ſpoken.

THIS ſoil, ſo generally adopted by ſtrangers, is delightful to me: here, all that can be deſirable, is in abundance; and France, by the temperature of it's climate, the excellence of it's vegetables, and the induſtry of its inhabitants, is to be preferred to either India.

IN fine, I love this country, where my connections are numerous, where eſteem is the moſt refined, friendſhip moſt intimate, and virtue moſt amiable.

A

VOYAGE, &c.

LETTER I.

L'Orient, 4 January, 1768.

I AM juſt arrived at L'Orient after having felt the moſt ſevere cold. The road was frozen from Paris to within ten leagues of Rennes. This city, which was burnt in 1720, has now a grandeur which it owes to its misfortune. There are ſeveral new buildings, two handſome ſquares, a ſtatue of Lewis the XVth. and alſo one of Lewis the XIVth. The inſide of the Parliament-Houſe is handſomely decorated, but with rather too much uniformity. The pannels of the wainſcot are painted white, and have gilt moldings. Moſt of the churches and public buildings are in this taſte. In other reſpects, Rennes is but a diſmal town. It is ſituated at the confluence of the *Villaine* and the *Iſle*; two ſmall rivers. Its ſuburbs are formed of ſome dirty houſes; the ſtreets are ill paved. The common people dreſs in a coarſe brown ſtuff, which gives them very much an air of poverty.

I saw in Britany, a vaſt deal of uncultivated land. Nothing grows upon it but broom, and a ſhrub with yellow flowers, which appeared to me a com-

poſition of thorns. The country people call it *Lande* or *Jan* *. They bruiſe it to feed their cattle with †. The broom ſerves only to heat their ovens; it might be turned to better account, and eſpecially in a maritime country. The Romans made a cordage of it, which they preferred to hemp, for their ſhipping. I owe this obſervation to Pliny, who is known to have commanded the fleets of the Empire ‡.

MIGHT not theſe lands be ſown to good purpoſe with potatoes, a certain ſubſiſtence, which can neither ſuffer by inclement ſeaſons, nor the ſtorehouſes of monopolizers.

INDUSTRY ſeems checked equally by an Ariſtocratic government, or in a *pays d'etats* §. The Peaſant, who is without a repreſentative in the aſſembly, is likewiſe without protection. In Britany he is ill clad, drinks nothing but water, and lives upon black bread.

THE miſery of mankind always increaſes in the ſame degree as their dependance. I have ſeen the

* In one word, *Furze*. *T*. † This is practiſed in ſome parts of *England*. *T*.

‡ This broom, which the author ſaw in Britany, muſt be of the kind, a ſpecies of the Spaniſh Spartum, which it is well known was uſed by the Ancients inſtead of hemp. *T*.

§ Many provinces in France have a kind of Parliament, and are called *Pais d'Etats*. Theſe Etats are nothing more than an aſſembly of the Nobleſſe of the province, who meet at leaſt once in every three years, for little other purpoſe, than to raiſe money for the crown; and in raiſing, take care to pay nothing themſelves. Such an Ariſtocratical aſſembly, is ſuppoſed by many politicians, to be more tyrannical, than a ſole and abſolute governor. The Reader will diſtinguiſh the *Etats* from the *Parlement*, which in France, is only a Supreme Court of Judicature; by which, indeed, the King's edicts are obliged to be regiſtered, before they are regularly of authority. *T*.

peaſant

peaſant rich in Holland; at his eaſe in Pruſſia; in a tolerable comfortable ſtate in Ruſſia, and labouring under the greateſt penury in Poland: I ſhall then certainly ſee the Negro, who is the Peaſant of our colonies, in a deplorable ſtate. I account thus for what I have ſaid; in a republic there is no ſovereign, in a monarchy, but one; but in an ariſtocracy, every peaſant is ſubject to his particular tyrant.

LIBERTY is the parent of induſtry. The Swiſs peaſant is ingenious, the villain of Poland is without imagination. This ſtupor of the ſoul, which enables a man, even more than philoſophy, to bear up againſt misfortune, ſeems to me to be a peculiar bleſſing. When Jupiter, ſays Homer, *reduces a man to the ſtate of a ſlave, he takes from him one half of his underſtanding.*

EXCUSE theſe reflections. When I ſee mankind ſtruggling with great miſeries, I cannot help enquiring, what will remedy them, or from whence they ariſe.

IN Lower Britany, Nature appears as it were, dwindled. The hills, vallies, trees, men and animals are very ſmall there.

THERE are in many places quarries of ſlate, and of black and red marble, and mines of lead, mixed with ſilver, which is very ductile. But the real riches of this country are its linens, its threads, and cattle. Induſtry revives with liberty, from the vicinity of the ſea-ports. This is perhaps, the only good conſequence of a maritime commerce, which is little elſe than an avarice, pointed out by law. Strange lot of man, that he ſhould frequently deduce greater benefits from the indulgence of his paſſions, than from the exerciſe of his reaſon.

THE peaſant here is much at his eaſe; he looks upon himſelf at liberty, from the neighbourhood of an element, all the roads to which are open. Oppreſſion cannot extend itſelf to any thing beyond his fortune: Is he hard preſſed, he embarks himſelf, and on ſhipboard finds the oak of his own incloſures; the linens woven by his own family, and grain, the growth of his own fields: Houſhold Gods by whom he has been abandoned! In the commander of the veſſel, he frequently recognizes the Lord of his own village, and in their common miſery ſees him a man, whoſe fortune is more to be complained of than his own. At liberty to judge of his own ſituation, he becomes maſter of it; and ſeated on the yard-arm, decides in the fury of a ſtorm upon that, which on ſhore, he durſt not make an object of enquiry.

I HAVE not yet ſeen Port L'Orient. Half a league before our arrival, we croſſed a ſmall arm of the ſea in a ferry-boat: I could ſcarcely diſtinguiſh the town. A thick fog covered the horizon: This is occaſioned by the vicinity of the ſea; but the winter is the leſs ſevere on this account.

THIS obſervation holds good as well in the neighbourhood of pools and lakes, as of the ſea. May not this be to favour the propagation of a multitude of inſects, and water vermin that inhabit the ſands of the ſhore? Whether this conjecture is right or not, the facility of living there, and the mild temperature, draw from the North an infinite number of ſea and water-fowls.

NATURE may well reſerve for them ſome portion of the coaſt, and of mild air, when ſhe has allotted to the fiſhes alone, above half the world.

I am, &c.

LETTER II.

L'Orient, January 18, 1768.

L'ORIENT is a ſmall town in Britany, which the commerce of the Eaſt Indies renders daily more flouriſhing. It is, like all other new towns, regular, the ſtreets in ſtrait lines, but unfiniſhed. It is but indifferently fortified. There are ſome fine warehouſes, the Hotel des Ventes, and a tower, whence one may ſee, wharfs which are but juſt begun, and ground plats whereon buildings are marked out.—It is ſituated at the bottom of a bay which receives the rivers *Blavet* and *Ponſcorf*; they are navigable, and a vaſt many ſhips come down by them to L'Orient. The entrance of this bay is narrow, and defended by a work they call Port Louis, or Blavet. The citadel of which is too much raiſed, and muſt occaſion the ſhot fired from it to be but of little effect. Its flanks, too narrow in themſelves, have alſo Orillons, which are never of uſe, but for defending the ditch; and there is none here but the ſea, which waſhes the foot of the ramparts.

PORT LOUIS is an old, and deſerted city. 'Tis a Gentleman of an ancient family in the neighbourhood of an Eaſt-India Nabob. The people of faſhion live at Port Louis; but the merchants, the muſlin, and ſilk warehouſes, the money, and the pretty women, are all at L'Orient. Their manners are the ſame here as in other commercial ports. Every man's purſe is open: but he lends money in the groſs only;

the intereſt of a ſum for the Indies is twenty-five or thirty per cent. per ann. The borrower is much worſe off than he that lends; his profits are uncertain, his bonds are not ſo. The law authoriſes this lending of money by contracts, and they give the creditors a ſort of claim upon the whole ſhip's cargo. A power which extends over the entire fortune of moſt of the ſeafaring people.

THERE are three ſhips ready to ſail for the Iſle of France, the Digue, the Condè, and the Marquis de Caſtries. There are others fitting out, and ſome more on the ſtocks. The noiſe of the carpenters and caulkers, the concourſe of ſtrangers, and the perpetual moving about of veſſels in the road, excites in the people a thirſt after every thing that is maritime: the idea of fortune, conſtantly accompanying that of the Indies, adds to the illuſion. You would think yourſelf a thouſand leagues from Paris. The people of the country no longer ſpeak French; thoſe in town, know no other maſter, than the Eaſt-India Company. The better ſort of people talk of the Iſle of France and Pondicherry, as if they were juſt by. You will ſuppoſe that counting-houſe diſputes come here in the bales from India, for intereſt rather tends to ſeparate men from each other, than to bring them together.

I am, &c.

LET-

LETTER III.

Port L'Orient, February 20, 1771.

WE waited only a fair wind, to ſet ſail. My paſſage is taken on board the Marquis de Caſtries, a ſhip of eight hundred tons, and one hundred and forty-ſix men, loaden with naval ſtores for Bengal. My birth is a little receſs from the Great Cabin. There are fifteen paſſengers, moſt of whom are lodged in the Gun-room, the place where they put the cartouches, and ordnance ſtores. The Maſter Gunner has the care of this part, and lodges here, as do alſo the Secretary, Chaplain, and Surgeon. Over this is the Great Cabin, where the paſſengers dine with the Captain. Over this again is the * Council Chamber, and the Captain's Cabin; it is decorated on the outſide with a gallery, and is the fineſt room in the ſhip. The officers cabins are before you come to theſe abovementioned, that they may with the more eaſe look to what is going forward upon deck.

THE crew lodge on the Forecaſtle, and between decks, a diſmal hole, where one can ſee nothing. The † Galliards are the length of the whole ſhip, which is level with the Great Cabin, and has a gangway before it, as the Cabin has. The Kitchen, or Cook-room, is under the Forecaſtle. The proviſions and merchandizes in the Hold; and the Powder-room is under the Gun-room.

* Called in Engliſh, the Coach. *T.*

† Galliards; the ſhip muſt, from this deſcription, have had a ſpare deck. *T.*

I HAVE given you a general ſketch of the diſpoſition of our ſhip; but to deſcribe the diſorder of it, is impoſſible. There is no getting along for the caſks of champagne, wine, trunks, cheſts and boxes every where about. Sailors ſwearing, cattle lowing, birds and poultry ſcreaming upon the Poop; and, as it blows hard, we have the additional noiſe of the whiſtling of the Ropes, and the cracking of the timbers and rigging as the ſhip rolls about at anchor. Several other ſhips lay near us, and we are deafened by the hallowing of their officers to us, through their ſpeaking-trumpets.

WEARIED with this uproar, I got into a boat and went aſhore at Port Louis.

THE wind was very high; we walked through the ſtreets, but met nobody. From the walls of the citadel, I ſaw the Horizon very black, and the iſland of *Groi* covered with a thick fog; upon the ſhore crouds of women chilled with cold and fear, and a centinel at the point of the Baſtion, in aſtoniſhment at the hardineſs of the poor wretches, who were fiſhing in the midſt of the tempeſt.

WE returned, buttoned up cloſe, wet through, and holding on our hats with our hands. As we went along, the ſtreets were covered with fiſh; white and purple ſkait, thornbacks, dog fiſh, conger eels of a monſtrous ſize, large baſkets full of crabs and lobſters, heaps of oyſters, muſcles and cockles, codlings, ſoles, and turbots; in ſhort, as miraculous a draught as that of the apoſtles.

THESE good folks are not without faith; for when they fiſh for pilchards, a prieſt goes in the firſt boat, and gives his benediction to the water. One might

ſee

ſee among them the conjugal affection of old times; for as they came dropping in, their wives and children hung about their necks: it is among theſe hard working people, that ſome remains of virtue is to be found, as if man retained his morals no longer than while he was in a ſtate between hope and fear.

THIS part of the coaſt abounds in fiſh: each ſpecies of which is, in general, larger than they are elſewhere; but their taſte is inferior. I was aſſured, that the pilchard fiſhery brought in four millions of livres, annually, to the revenue of the province. It is rather ſingular, that there are no crawfiſh in the rivers of Britany; occaſioned, perhaps, by the ſtillneſs of the water.

WE are now got once more to our inn; the noiſe of the wind and ſea ſtill buzzing in our ears. Two Pariſians, the Sieurs B***, father and ſon, who were to have gone in our ſhip, without ſaying a word to us, ordered a chaiſe, and are gone to Paris.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

On board the MARQUIS DE CASTRIES, the 3d of MARCH, Eleven in the Morning.

I HAVE but juſt time to ſay adieu; we are ſetting ſail. Pray take care of the letters incloſed; three are for Ruſſia, Pruſſia, and Poland. Wherever I have travelled, I left ſomebody whom I regret.

BUT our anchor is a peek. I hear the noiſe of the Boatſwain's whiſtle, the capſtern, and the ſailors heaving anchor. The laſt gun is juſt fired. We are under ſail, and the ſhore, the ramparts and roofs of Port Louis begin to diſappear. Adieu, ye friends, who are dearer to me than the treaſures of India. Adieu! Adieu!

JOURNAL.

JOURNAL.

MARCH, 1768.

WE ſailed on the third at a quarter paſt eleven in the morning, the wind at N. E. the tide not being high enough, we were very near touching upon a rock, to the right of the Channel. When we were abreaſt of the iſland of *Groi*, we lay to for ſome of the paſſengers and officers.

THE 4th, the weather was fine; but the wind began to riſe, and the ſea to run high in the evening.

THE 5th, a violent ſtorm aroſe; the ſhip was on her way under her courſes. I was terribly ſea-ſick. At half paſt ten in the morning, being in bed, I felt a great ſhock; ſomebody cried out, that the ſhip had ſtruck. I went upon deck, where I found all the people in conſternation. A wave ſtruck us on the ſtarboard-ſide and carried away the yawl, with the mate and three men. One of them only remained, entangled in the ſhrouds of the main maſt, from whence he was taken, with his ſhoulder and hand ſhattered to pieces. It was impoſſible to ſave the others; they were ſeen no more.

THIS misfortune happened by the veſſels not anſwering the helm. Her poop was too low in the water, to ſuffer the rudder to act properly upon her. The bad weather laſted all day, and the motion of the ſhip killed moſt of the poultry. I had a dog on board, that panted inceſſantly with uneaſineſs. The only

only animals that ſeemed inſenſible, were ſome ſparrows and canary birds, accuſtomed to a perpetual motion. Theſe birds are carried to India as curioſities.

I, as well as the other paſſengers was exceedingly ſick. There is no remedy for this evil, which occaſions the moſt dreadful reachings. It is good however, to take ſome dry food, and above all acid fruits.

THE 6th, the weather being fine, we offered up our prayers for the ſouls of the poor ſailors we loſt in the late ſtorm. The ſea, in breaking upon the veſſel, had ſplit the beam that goes round the hatchway, although it was ten inches thick.

THE 7th, we reckoned ourſelves to be in the latitude of Cape Finiſtere, where guſts of wind, and a great ſea, as at all other capes, are very common.

THE 8th, a beautiful ſea and fair wind. We ſaw flying about, ſome white birds with black borders round their wings; they call them Manches de Velours (*Velvet Sleeves.*)

THE 9th and 10th, the air began to be ſenſibly hotter, and the ſky more pleaſing. We approached the *Fortunate* iſland (the Azores) if it be true, that Heaven has placed good fortune in any particular iſland.

THE 11th, the wind fell calm, the ſea was covered with bonnets de feu (*bonnets of fire*) a kind of mucilage, formed into the ſhape of a cap, with a progreſſive motion. In the morning we ſaw a ſhip.

THE

THE 12th and 13th, ſome good regulations were made. It was agreed, that each paſſenger ſhould have but one bottle of water a day. Breakfaſt was to be at ten every morning, and was to conſiſt of ſalted meats and dry vegetables. Our afternoon meal, at four o'clock, was a rather better repaſt. All fires were to be put out at eight o'clock.

ON the 14th, we expected to ſee the iſland of Madeira, but we were too much weſtward; it was calm all day. We ſaw two birds, brown, and of the ſize of a pigeon, flying to the weſtward, as high as the maſts. We took them for land birds, and judged, from their appearing, that ſome iſland was to our left hand.

THE 15th, the calm continued; but the wind roſe a little towards night: an Engliſh brig paſſed us in the afternoon, and ſaluted us with his flag.

THE 16th, at ſun riſe, we ſaw the iſland of Palma before us; on the left is the iſland of Teneriffe with its Pike, which is in the ſhape of a dome, with a pyramid on the top. Theſe iſlands were enveloped in a fog all day, and at night in ſtorms of lightning: an appearance which terrified the mariners who firſt diſcovered them. It is known, that the Romans had heard of them; becauſe Sertorius was deſirous of retiring to them. The Carthaginians, who traded on the coaſt of Africa, knew them well. *Juba*, the hiſtorian, ſays, there are five of them; and deſcribes them at large: he calls one of them the Iſle of Snow, becauſe it is covered with it all the year. The Pike is, in fact, covered with ſnow, although the air is ſo hot. Theſe iſlands are the ruins of that large iſland of Atlantis, of which Plato ſpeaks. By the depth of the cavities, out of which their mountains are raiſed,

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one would think they were the ruins of this original world, when overturned by an event, the tradition of which remains among all nations. According to *Juba*, the iſland of Canary took it's name from the large dogs bred there. The Spaniards, to whom they belong, got excellent Malmſey * from thence.

THE 17th, 18th, and 19th, we paſſed through the midſt of theſe iſlands, having Teneriffe on our left, and Palma on our right; Gomera was to the eaſtward. I took a draught of theſe iſlands, which are cut in with very deep ravines (or furrows.)

WE ſaw a flying fiſh. A lapwing came and perched on our ſhip, and took it's flight to the weſt; it was of an orange-colour, it's wings and aigrette mottled with black and white, its beak is black as ebony, and a little bent.

THE 20th, we left the iſland of Ferro to the weſt, and loſt ſight of all the Canaries. The ſight of thoſe iſlands, ſituated in ſo fine a climate, excited in us many fruitleſs wiſhes. We compared the repoſe, and abundance, the union and pleaſures of theſe iſlands, to our own unquiet life of agitation. Perhaps, at ſeeing us paſs by, ſome unhappy Canarian was upon a burning rock, wiſhing himſelf on board a ſhip, that ſteered under full ſail for the Eaſt-Indies.

THE 21ſt, we ſaw a land-ſwallow, and afterwards a ſhark. While we were in the latitude of theſe

* The wine at preſent brought from the Canaries, is chiefly ſack, which name, it is generally ſuppoſed to have always been diſtinguiſhed by; yet I have heard ſome firſt-rate critics doubt very much, whether any human being could drink *ſack and ſugar* for pleaſure; and they therefore ſuſpect, that Falſtaff's ſack was Rheniſh Wine. *T.*

iſlands,

iſlands, we were becalmed all day, the wind riſing in the evening only.

THE 22d, the weather was ſo hot, as to occaſion ſeveral bottles of Champagne to break, although they were caſed in ſalt; this is a ſtore, that moſt of the Officers going to India take with them; it is ſold there at a piſtole a bottle. This inundation, which penetrated every thing, deſtroyed ſome lettices and creſſes, that I had ſown in wet moſs, where theſe plants grow ſurprizingly. This ſalted liquor was ſo very corroſive, as to entirely ſpoil all my papers that got wetted with it.

THE 23d, we had a very freſh wind; the ſea appeared to be grey and greeniſh, as upon banks, or in ſoundings; they pretend to find ſoundings above eighty leagues from the coaſt of Africa, which is but little raiſed in theſe latitudes. We ſaw a ſhip bearing away for Senegal.

THE 24th, we found the trade wind, from the N. W. The ſhip rolled very much.

THE 25th and 26th, fine weather and fair wind; we paſſed the latitude of the Cape de Verd iſlands, but did not ſee them; they belong to Portugal; freſh proviſions are to be had there; but water, the chief article, is very ſcarce. We ſaw ſome flying fiſhes and a land ſwallow. The French wheat, in the Bread-room, heated to ſuch a degree, that there was no bearing one's hand in it. It has happened ſometimes, that ſhips have been ſet on fire by this means. In 1760, an Engliſh ſhip, loaden with hemp, was burnt in the Baltic. The hemp took fire of itſelf. I ſaw the wreck of her on the coaſt of the iſle of Bornholm.

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THE 27th, an awning was ſpread from head to ſtern, to ſhelter the people from the heat. We ſaw ſome *galeres*, a ſpecies of living mucilage.

THE 28th and 29th, we ſaw flying-fiſh, and a great number of tunny-fiſh.

THE 30th, our men got ready for fiſhing, and took ten tunny-fiſh, the leaſt of which weighed ſixty pounds; we ſaw a ſhark. The heat increaſed, and the crew bore their thirſt with great impatience.

THE 31ſt, we took a bonnito; ſome thirty ſailors in the night opened the water jars of ſeveral paſſengers, who by that means found themſelves, as the crew were, reduced to a pint of water a day.

Some OBSERVATIONS on the MANNERS of SEAFARING PEOPLE.

I WILL only ſpeak of the influence the ſea has upon theſe men, in order that thoſe faults which are the conſequences of their way of life, may meet with the indulgence due to them.

THE haſte which is abſolutely neceſſary in operations on board a ſhip, renders them coarſe in their expreſſions. Living at a diſtance from land, they think themſelves independent; hence it is that they frequently ſpeak of Princes, laws or religion, with a freedom equal to their ignorance. Not but they are in ſome circumſtances, devout, and even ſuperſtitious. I have known more than one, who would not ſo much as touch a rope on a Sunday or Friday. But in general, their religion depends upon the weather.

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THE idleneſs in which they live, makes them fond of ſcandal and ſtories. The quarter-deck is the place where the officers deal out fables and wonders.

THE habit of making new acquaintances continually, renders them inconſtant in their ſociety and taſte. At ſea they wiſh for land, on ſhore they murmur that they are not at ſea.

IN a long voyage, it is beſt to give way a little, and never to diſpute. The ſea naturally ſours the temper; and the ſlighteſt contradiction will breed a quarrel. I have ſeen one ariſe on a queſtion in philoſophy. It is true theſe queſtions have ſometimes cauſed no ſmall miſchief on ſhore.

IN general, they are ſilent and thoughtful; who can be gay, when ſurrounded with dangers, and deprived of the principal neceſſaries of life?

THEIR good qualities however, muſt not be forgotten. They are open, generous, brave, and above all, good huſbands. A ſeaman looks upon himſelf as a ſtranger when aſhore, and moſtly ſo in his own houſe. Unaccuſtomed to the manner of living, he leaves to his wife the management of a world, of which he is ignorant.

To theſe good and bad qualities of ſeamen, muſt be added the vices of their education. They are given to drunkenneſs. Every day a ration of wine or brandy is iſſued. There are ſeven men in a meſs, and I have ſeen them agree among themſelves to drink alternately the allowance of the whole ſeven. Some of them are given to thieving; and there are of theſe, men ſo dextrous as to ſtrip their comrades while ſleeping; others again, are of an extraordinary pro-

bity. The maſter and gunner, are commonly the men entruſted, upon whom devolves the government of the crew. One may add to theſe, the chief pilot, who, I don't know why, does not hold among us that rank which his merit deſerves; he is but the firſt *officier marinier* *. Upon theſe three men depends the good behaviour of the crew, and very often the ſucceſs of the navigation.

THE laſt man in the ſhip is the cook. The cabbin-boys are often uſed very barbarouſly. There is ſcarce an officer or ſailor, that does not make them ſenſible when he is in an ill humour. They even amuſe themſelves on board ſome ſhips, with flogging them in calm weather, to procure a wind †. Thus, man, who is ſo often complaining of his weakneſs, ſeldom has power, but he abuſes it.

YOU will gather from all this, that a ſhip is a place of diſſention; that a convent and an iſland, which is a kind of ſhip, muſt be filled with diſcord; and that the intention of Nature, which is in other reſpects ſo plainly pointed out, is, that the earth ſhould be peopled with families, and not with ſocieties and fraternities.

* In Britiſh men of war, the Captain and Lieutenants, are conſidered as Gentlemen by their office, and generally are ſo by their behaviour or birth. They all have commiſſions. The maſter, his mates, and the carpenter, gunner, &c. are only warrant officers, and in general are low born and educated, people, who by their good behaviour, and application in their reſpective branches in ſeamanſhip, have qualified themſelves for their particular commands. Theſe are what the Author probably means by *officiers mariniers*. *T.*

† This cuſtom is not unknown to many of our cabbin-boys. *T.*

APRIL

APRIL, 1768.

THE 1ſt, we ſaw ſome ſharks and took one, as alſo a bonite. I intend to continue my obſervations on fiſhes at the end of my journal for this month.

THE 2d, we had calm weather, and now and then ſqualls.—We are upon the borders of the ſouthern trade winds. In the afternoon we had a ſquall that made us reef all our ſails. We draw near to the line; and have now very little twilight.

THE 3d, we took ſome bonnitos, and a ſhark. We were conſtantly ſurrounded by the ſame ſhole of tunny fiſh.

THE 4th, we had a ſtormy ſky, and a violent ſquall, with thunder at a diſtance. A ſailor died of the ſcurvy. Many others are ill of it. This diſorder ſhewing itſelf ſo early, ſpreads an alarm through the whole crew. We took ſeveral bonitos and ſharks.

THE 5th and 6th, yeſterday morning at three o'clock, it blew a moſt terrible ſtorm, and obliged us to reef all our ſails except the mizen. I have always remarked, that the riſing of the moon diſpels the clouds very perceptibly. Two hours after it is above the horizon, the ſky is perfectly clear. We had a calm theſe two days, and ſome drops of rain.

THE 7th, we took ſome bonitos. I ſaw ſome glaſs cut with ſciſſars under water; the cauſe of which I am ignorant of.

THE 8th and 9th, we caught one ſhark, ſome ſucking-fiſh, or remoras, and two tunny fiſhes.

Although near the line, the heat was not very troubleſome to me; the air is cooled by the ſtorms.

THE 10th, the ducking at the line, was announced, we were within one degree. A ſailor diſguiſed in a maſk, came to the Captain, and deſired him to cauſe the old cuſtom to be obſerved. This is a frolic deſigned to divert the melancholy of the crew. The ſailors are very diſpirited; the ſcurvy gets a-head among them, and we have not gone one third of the voyage.

THE 11th, the ceremony of dipping was performed. The principal paſſengers were ranged along a cord, to which their thumbs were tied with a rib-band. Some drops of water were poured on their heads, and they then gave ſome money to the pilots.

THE wind was contrary; the ſky and the ſea very fine.

THE 12th, we could not get paſt the line. The currents ran northward. We now ſee the polar-ſtar no more. We ſaw a ſhip to the Eaſt.

THE 13th, we croſſed the line. The ſea appeared at night, as if covered with phoſphorus. The lower deck is cleaned every Sunday; the cheſts and hammocks of the crew are brought upon deck, and then pitch is burnt between decks; the third part of the water-caſks were found to be empty, although we had not gone near a third of our voyage.

THE 14th, 15th, and 16th, the winds varied. It was very hot. We were continually ſurrounded with bonitos, tunny-fiſh, porpoiſes, and flemiſh-caps.

caps. We ſaw a ſhark of an enormous ſize. The weather calm in general, but ſometimes ſtormy.

THE 17th, 18th, and 19th, the calms and the heats continued. The pitch melted from the rigging. Spleen and impatience increaſed aboard the ſhip. 'Tis not unuſual to lay becalmed a whole month under the line. I ſaw a whale going to the weſtward.

THE 20th, 21ſt, and 22d, the calm, and our uneaſineſs continued; the ſhip was ſurrounded with ſharks. We ſaw one tied to a *paillaiſon*, in a large ridge of ſurf running from Eaſt to Weſt. It was alive; ſome ſhip had certainly paſſed by juſt before us.

WE catched ſome tunny-fiſhes, bonitoes, five or ſix ſharks, and a porpoiſe, with a very ſharp pointed head. The ſailors ſay that the porpoiſe forbodes wind; in effect, at midnight it aroſe.

THE 23d, we entered at laſt into the South-Weſt trade-winds, which were to carry us beyond the other tropic. We took ſome bonitos and tunny-fiſh. As we were drawing one of theſe fiſhes out of the water, a ſhark catched it by the tail, and broke the line. We ſaw a frigate-bird; it is black and grey, and nearly of the ſame form as a ſtork. Its flight is very lofty.

THE 24th and 25th, we had ſome ſqualls, which occaſioned the wind to change. Towards evening the moon was encompaſſed with a large halo. We catched bonitos, and tunny fiſh.

The 26th, we ſaw frigate-birds, flying-fiſh, tunny-fiſh, bonitos, and a white bird, which the crew ſaid was a booby. In the evening, all the ſails being ſet, we were attacked by a violent ſquall, which laid us on one ſide for ſome minutes. Our ſhip is a bad ſailor, and when the wind is quite fair, makes but about two leagues an hour.

The 27th, the ſea ran high; the wind was freſh, and had ſome ſqualls of rain. We ſaw the ſame fiſhes, and a halcyon, which the Engliſh call the Bird of Storms *. I ſhall reſerve an article of my journal for ſea-fowl.

THE 28th, we had freſh winds, and ſqualls, with rain. Six guns were carried forward, from the aft-part of the ſhip, —— that being deeper in the water forward, ſhe might ſteer the better. We had very ſtormy weather, which is rare in theſe latitudes. Saw the ſame tunnies.

THE 29th, fine weather, but ſometimes ſqually. We ſaw ſome frigate-birds, and a white bird, with wings marked with grey. At ſun-ſet, we ſaw a ſhip to windward, ſteering the ſame courſe as we.

THE 30th, a fine freſh wind and beautiful ſea. The air cooler. We ſaw the ſhip we had ſeen laſt night, a little to windward. She had crouded ſail; we did the like; ſhe hoiſted Engliſh colours, we ours. We catched tunnies, and ſaw flying-fiſh.

* Petrels, alluding it is ſaid, to St. Peter, when our Saviour walked on the ſea. They ſeem to walk in a ſhip's wake, particularly in ſtorms. The common ſailors call them *Mother Carey's Chickens*.

OBSER-

OBSERVATIONS upon the SEA and FISHES.

THERE is ſcarcely ſo diſmal a ſight as the main ſea. A man becomes preſently impatient of being in the centre of a circle, the circumference of which he never attains to. It however preſents ſome very intereſting ſcenes. I do not ſpeak of it when tempeſtuous only. During a calm, and eſpecially at night in hot climates, it is ſurprizing to ſee the ſparkling of it. I have taken in a glaſs ſome of thoſe luminous points of which it is full; and have ſeen them move about with great vivacity. They are ſaid to be the fry of fiſh; and are ſometimes ſeen in a heap together appearing like moons. At night, when the ſhip is under way, and is ſurrounded by fiſh that accompany it, the ſea appears like a vaſt firework, all ſparkling with ſerpents and ſilver ſpangles.

I LEAVE you to think what a prodigious quantity of living beings this element muſt be the country of. I confine myſelf to ſome obſervations upon different ſpecies of fiſhes found in the main ſea.

THE bonnet-flamand, which I believe the Ancients called *pulmo-marinus*, is a ſpecies of animal, formed of a very glaring ſubſtance. It is not unlike a champignon, or muſhroom. Its upper part has a power of contraction and dilatation, by the which it moves very ſlowly. I know no other property of it; 'tis ſo common, that we found the ſea covered with it for many days. It can change its ſhape and colour; but the ſhape naturally is always the ſame. They are found very large upon the coaſt of Normandy.

THE *galere* is of the ſame ſubſtance, but ſeems endued with more intelligence and malignity. Its body is a kind of oval bladder, covered lengthways with a tuft or ſail, which is always out of the water, in the ſame direction as the wind. When overturned by a wave, it riſes again quickly, and always preſents the convex ſide of its body to the wind. I have ſeen many of them together, ranged like a fleet of ſhips. There might perhaps, be ſome kind of ſail contrived upon this principle, by means of which a bark might get on, although the wind were contrary. From the lower part of the *galere*, hang ſeveral long blue filaments, with which it ſeizes whatever attempts to take it. Theſe filaments burn immediately, like the moſt violent cauſtic. I one day ſaw a young ſailor who ſwam after, and attempted to catch one of them, burnt on the arm ſo terribly, that the fright nearly occaſioned his being drowned. The *galere*, while alive, is the moſt beautiful colours; ſome of them are of a ſky-blue, and ſome of a roſe-colour. The *bonnet-flamand* *, is found in our ſeas, and the *galere* in thoſe near the tropics.

IN the latitude of the Azores, I ſaw a kind of ſhell-fiſh, floating and living on the ſurface of the ſea, ſhaped like the beard of an arrow, or beak of a bird. It is ſmall, tranſparent, and very eaſy to break. This is perhaps the ſame that is found in Ambergreaſe.

IN the ſame latitude, we found ſome ſnails, that were blue, and floated on the ſurface of the water, like bladders filled with air. Their ſhell was very thin and brittle, and filled with a liquor of a beau-

* Or Flemiſh Bonnet.

tiful

tiful purpliſh blue colour. This is not however, the purple fiſh of the Ancients.

A SPECIES of ſhell-fiſh much more common, is that which ſticks itſelf to the ſides of the ſhip, by means of a ligament, which it ſhortens or contracts, in bad weather. It is white, ſhaped like an almond, and compoſed of four pieces. It puts out a number of filaments, that have a regular motion. They multiply ſo very faſt, that the courſe of the ſhip is ſenſibly retarded by them.

THE flying-fiſh is very common between the tropics. It is of the ſize of a herring. It flies in a troop and at one ſingle ſpring, the uſual flight of a partridge. In the ſea, 'tis hunted by the fiſhes, and in the air by the birds. It's deſtiny ſeems a very unfortunate one, that in the air the ſame danger ſhould await it, which it fled from in the water. But it has a compenſation for the misfortune, for as a fiſh, it often eſcapes from the birds, and as a bird from the fiſhes. 'Tis in ſtorms chiefly, that it is ſeen flying from the *fregattes* and tunnies, which make prodigious leaps in purſuit of it.

THE *encornet*, makes nearly the ſame manœuvre as the flying-fiſh. It has the faculty of black'ning the water by throwing into it a very black ink, and it does not ſwim altogether ſo well; it is of a conoid form. Theſe two kinds of fiſh frequently fall on board of ſhips, and are very fine eating.

THE tunny-fiſh of theſe ſeas differs in taſte from that of the Mediterranean. It is very dry, and has no fat but in the eye. It has very little entrails. Its fleſh appears pinched, or compreſſed together by the ſkin. Eight muſcles, four large, and four ſmall,

ſmall, form its body, the tranſverſe ſection of which reſembles that of a tree. They fiſh for it at ſun-riſe, and ſun-ſet, becauſe then the ſhade of the waves diſguiſes the bate, which is made to repreſent a flying-fiſh. This ſhoal of tunnies followed us theſe ſix weeks paſt. They are eaſily known; among them there is one, which has a red wound on the back, from being ſtruck with a harpoon a fortnight ago: but his courſe was not retarded by it.

CAN a fiſh exiſt without ſleep, and is ſea-water of a healing quality to wounds? I have ſomewhere read that Monſieur de Chirac, cured the Duke of Orleans of a wound in the wriſt, by ordering it to be ſteeped in the waters of Balaru.

THE tunny when eaten freſh, is wholeſome, though it occaſions thirſt,—it is dangerous in theſe latitudes to eat it ſalted—for one of our ſailors having done ſo, his ſkin turned as red as ſcarlet, and he had a fever for twenty-four hours after.

AMONG the tunnies we took a number of bonitos. They are a ſort of mackarel, ſome of which are as large as tunnies. In the fleſh of many were found living worms, as big as a grain of barley, which did not ſeem at all troubleſome to the fiſh.

SHARKS are very numerous near the Line. As ſoon as it is calm the ſhip is ſurrounded with them. This fiſh ſwims along ſlowly, and without noiſe. It is preceded by many ſmall fiſhes called pilot-fiſh, ſpeckled with black and yellow. If any thing falls into the ſea, they inſtantly reconnoitre, and return to the ſhark, who approaching his prey, turns himſelf, and devours it. If it is a bird, he does not touch

touch it; but when preſſed by hunger, he ſwallows every thing, even iron nails.

THE ſhark is the tyger of the ſea. I have ſeen ſome, more than ten feet long. By nature it is very ſhort-ſighted. It ſwims very ſlowly, from the round form of its head, which joined to the poſition of its mouth, that obliges it to turn upon its ſide, in order to ſwallow, preſerves a number of fiſhes from its voracity. It has no bones, but cartilages, like other fiſhes of prey, as the ſea-dog, the thornback, the polypus. Theſe like the ſhark, ſee but badly, are ſlow ſwimmers, and have their mouths placed quite beneath, and are alſo viviparous.

The jaws of the ſhark are armed with five or ſix rows of teeth above and below. They are flat, and ſharp at the ſides, which are ſerrated. They have but two rows perpendicular, the others are hidden, and diſpoſed in ſuch a manner, that they replace by an admirable mechaniſm, thoſe that frequently are liable to be broken.

THEY bait for it with a piece of fleſh, faſtened upon an iron crook. Before they draw it out of the water, they fix round the ſail a ſliding knot, and as ſoon as it is upon the deck, and attempts to ſtrike, or wound the ſailors, they cut it off with a hatchet. This tail has but one fin, ſhaped like a ſickle. The Chineſe eſteem this as an aphrodiſiaque. In other reſpects, this fiſh is of no utility. Its fleſh has a taſte of the thornback, and a ſmell of urine, and is reckoned feveriſh. The ſailors fiſh for this creature, merely to deſtroy it. They put out the eyes, gut them, tie two or three together by the tails, and throw them into the ſea; a ſpectacle worthy of a ſailor. The ſhark is ſo vivacious, as to move, long after

after the head is cut off; yet, I have ſeen them drowned very faſt, by being plunged ſeveral times in the ſea, after being ſtruck by a hook, which keeps their mouth open.

WE almoſt conſtantly took upon the Shark, a fiſh called a Sucking-fiſh, or *Remora*, about as big as a Herring. It has upon the head an oval ſurface, a little concave, with which it fixes itſelf upon any body, by forming a vacuum, between the oval ſurface and the body, to which it adheres in the manner of a leathern ſucker. I have put ſome of them alive upon an even ſmooth glaſs, from which I could not afterwards take them. This fiſh has this ſingularity, that it ſwims with the head and gills out of water, its ſkin is courſe and rough, and its mouth armed with ſeveral rows of ſmall teeth. We often have eaten the Sucking-fiſh, and found the taſte like fried artichokes.

BESIDES the Pilot and Sucking-fiſh, the Shark nouriſhes under it's ſkin an inſect, ſhaped like the half of a pea, with a beak that projects a long way. It is a kind of louſe.

THE Porpoiſe is a fiſh well known. I have ſeen of one ſort, that has the ſnout very pointed. The ſailors, on account of its ſwiftneſs, call it the Sea-arrow. I have ſeen them go quite round about the ſhip, while ſhe made two leagues an hour. They throw a dart at this animal, which pants when taken, and ſeems to complain; it is a bad fiſh; it's fleſh is black, hard, groſs and oily.

I HAVE alſo ſeen a *Dorado*, which they ſay, is the lighteſt of all fiſh. It is alſo ſaid, that this is the Dolphin of the antients, ſo fully deſcribed by Pliny.

Be

Be as it may, we did not experience much of it's friendſhip to mankind; but ſaw, at a great depth, the ſhining of its golden fins, and it's back of a beautiful azure.

WE ſometimes ſaw, at half a league's diſtance, Whales, throwing up their jetdéau. They are ſmaller here than in the North; and appeared to me, a far off, like a boat, bottom upwards.

SUCH are the ſpecies of fiſh I have hitherto ſeen. Sharks are ſeen in a calm, and are commonly followed by the *Dorados*; the Porpoiſes appear when the wind freſhens. The Tunnies have followed us conſtantly for ſix weeks paſt.

IF this detail has been tireſome to you, conſider what my pleaſures muſt have been. There are none for a man, upon an element, with the inhabitants of which he cannot connect himſelf.

MAY,

MAY, 1768.

THE 1ſt, at ſun riſe, the veſſel we had ſeen ſome days before, was in our wake, and gaining upon us inſenſibly; at ten in the morning ſhe was along ſide of us. We remarked, that all her ſails were very old, that the cheſts and beds of the crew were upon deck. They aſked us in Engliſh, *What cheer? What's your ſhip called? Where do you come from? Where are you bound?* We anſwered in Engliſh, and aſked them the ſame queſtions. She came from London, ſixty-four days before; and was bound for China. She was pierced for twenty-four guns, and was of about five hundred tons burthen. She wiſhed us a good voyage, and continued her way. Saw ſome Frigate Birds, Tunnies, and Bonites.

THE 2d and 3d, again ſaw the Engliſh ſhip, which the Tunnies followed, after having borne us company ſo long. We had violent ſqualls from the Weſt. Theſe variations, in my opinion, ariſe from the neighbourhood of *All Saints* Bay; and I believe the currents and leeway ſhe made by not anſwering her helm, have carried her nearer to America* than we were aware of.

THE 4th and 5th, the wind was violent and changeable. We ſaw a Fouquet, a bird that is black and grey; ſome Frigate Birds and Boobies, that were diving to catch fiſh.

THE 6th and 7th, a good breeze and fine ſea; laſt night we had violent ſqualls. We ſaw ſome Frigate Birds taking their courſe to the N. E.

* The Abbè de la Caille ſays, that in his Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope, the ſhip was conſtantly and conſiderably to the weſtward of the Reckonings. *T.*

THE 8th and 9th. Yeſterday the wind was very violent, and the ſea very high. The ſhip lay on her ſide, and the water came in at the ports. Towards the evening the wind fell calm, which it commonly does, when the ſun gets in the quarter oppoſite it. We ſaw a great number of land birds and ſome gulls, ſigns that we were near land, from whence theſe ſqualls aroſe.

THE 14th, Calm. At nine in the evening, as I ſtood talking in the gallery with the captain, I ſaw all the horizon enlightened by a very luminous fire, running from the Eaſt to the North, and ſhooting forth red ſparks. In the day-time the clouds ſtopped and appeared like land to the Southward.

THE 14th, we had violent ſqualls with ſome thunder. Here the S. E. winds commonly end, but ſometimes they reach to twenty-eight degrees of latitude. We now looked for the weſterly winds, with which they double the Cape of Good Hope.

THE 17th, 18th, and 19th, the weather was fine although foggy; we perceived a ſurge coming from the Weſt, which always precedes a wind from that quarter. Laſt night we ſaw a ſecond luminous appearance, and in the afternoon a Whale to the S. W. a league and a half from us. They imagined in the morning, that they ſaw a ſea fowl, called the Mouton de Cap, or Cape Sheep.† This bird is found in the latitudes of the Cape of Good Hope.

† Called by the Engliſh, Albatroſſe. Their wings, when extended, will meaſure ten feet, ſometimes more, and have one more joint than the wings of other birds; for this reaſon, if they are put on their feet upon deck, they cannot fly away, being unable to riſe; but from the water. *T.*

OBSER-

OBSERVATIONS on the SKY, WINDS, and BIRDS.

THE ſtars to the Eaſtward ſeem to be more luminous than thoſe to weſtward. One may diſtinguiſh beſides the croſs of the ſouth, the magellanick Conſtellation, which are two white clouds, formed by multitudes of little ſtars. One ſide of which are ſeen two ſpaces more dark than the other parts of the ſky.

IN approaching the Line, the twilight decreaſes ſo much, that the day is almoſt entirely diſtinct from the night. It is eaſily explained, why the twilight increaſes with the refraction of the rays toward the poles. In theſe regions, ſcarcely inhabited, light is mingled with the darkneſs, eſpecially in the Aurora Borealis, which in all places, is the greater, the leſs the ſun is elevated above the horizon. How very inconvenient would it have been, had the night between the tropics partaken of day light. The night ſeems made for the Blacks of Africa, who wait the cloſe of day, that they may dance and revel: 'Tis at this time, that the wild beaſts of theſe parts come to refreſh themſelves in the rivers, and that the turtles go on ſhore to lay their eggs. Is there not then a a ſenſible heat in the rays of the ſun, although refracted? The torrid zone would have been uninhabitable, had there been long twilights. In other reſpects, the night in theſe climates is finer than the day. The riſing moon diſpels the vapours with which the air is impregnated. I have ſo often made this remark, that I am of the ſailors opinion, who ſay that the moon ſwallows up the clouds. On the other hand, can the influence

influence of the moon upon our atmoſphere be denied, when we allow it to have ſo great a one upon the ocean *.

ON this ſide the Line, the winds in general are N. E. and on the other ſide, S. E. Theſe winds appear to ariſe from the air being dilated by the ſun, and reflected by the poles. The S. E. winds extend farther than the N. E. as may be ſeen by the journal of winds. They are commonly met with in three or four degrees of N. latitude. The S. pole is moreover colder than the N. perhaps becauſe the ſun is longer on the northern ſide. Navigators who have attempted to diſcover the ſouthern continent, have found ice in forty-five degrees †.

THESE winds continually waft to America, the vapours raiſed by the ſun from the Atlantic. Thoſe of the South-Sea, ſerve to fertilize a part of Aſia and Africa. The wind in general blows harder by day than by night.

WITHOUT clouds there would be no rivers; and they do not contribute leſs to the beauty of the Heavens, than to the fruitfulneſs of the Earth.

I HAVE frequently admired the riſing and ſetting of the ſun: 'tis a ſpectacle not leſs difficult to deſcribe than to paint. Figure to yourſelf the horizon of a beautiful orange colour, tinged with green, which as it approaches to the zenith, loſes itſelf in a lilach

* This is a part of natural philoſophy which has been very little attended to by the learned; it is commonly ſaid, that the principal changes of the weather, occur at the time of new and full moon; and more particularly when ſhe is neareſt the earth. T.

† And ſome have ſailed as far as 56 deg. before they met with ice. T.

hue, while the reſt of the ſky is of a moſt glorious blue. The clouds floating to and fro of a clear pearl coloured grey, ſometimes diſpoſed in long ſtreaks of crimſon or ſcarlet; all the tints lively, diſtinct, and bordered with a fringe of gold.

ONE evening the clouds to the weſtward, appeared in the ſhape of a vaſt net, like black ſilk. As ſoon as the ſun began to paſs behind it, each maſh of the net looked as if it raiſed in a thread of gold. The gold then changed into flame colour and ſcarlet, and the deeper part of the ſky was coloured with light teints of purple, green, and ſky blue.

A STRANGE variety of landſcapes are frequently formed in the ſky, in which the moſt uncouth figures preſent themſelves to the imagination. We ſee in them, promontories, ſteep and rugged rocks, towers, and villages, over which the light diffuſes all the colours of the priſm. 'Tis to the brilliancy of their colours we muſt attribute the beauty of the birds of India, and the ſhell-fiſh of theſe ſeas; but why are not the birds of the ſea of theſe countries ſo handſome as ours? I will reſerve the examination of this problem to another article; and now deſcribe to you thoſe I ſaw flying about our ſhip, with the names given them by ſeafaring people. You may imagine that this deſcription cannot be a very accurate one.

THE bird moſt commonly met with in all latitudes, is a ſpecies of ſwallow *, or halcyon, called by the

* Taken for the king's fiſher, or a ſpecies of it. Meige's deſcription of the Alcyon, in his dictionary, differs totally from the author's, and is as follows. "A ſea-bird, that lays her eggs on "the ſands—She is a little bigger than a ſparrow; her ſea hers "purple, mixed with white; her neck long and ſmall; her bill "green, long, and ſlender." It is ſaid when ſhe lays, be the ſeaſon ever ſo ſtormy, it becomes preſently calm, until the young be hatched and brought up, which is the ſpace of forty days. *T.*

Engliſh

Engliſh, the *foul-weather bird*, or *petrel*. It is of a blackiſh brown, ſkims on the ſurface of the water, and in bad weather follows the wake of the ſhip. It is probable that why it follows ſhips at that time, is to find a ſhelter from the wind; for the ſame reaſon it flies between the two ſurges in ſkimming the water's edge.

As high up as Cape Finiſterre we ſaw ſome ſea-mews, the wings of which are bordered with black. They are about the ſize of a duck, and fly, fluttering their wings, on the ſurface of the ſea. They do not fly far from land, whither they retire every evening.

WE ſaw the frigate-birds firſt in 2 and half deg. of N. latitude. They were thought to come from the Iſland of Aſcenſion, which is in 8 deg. S. latitude. In form and ſize, they are like a ſtork, are black and white, have wings that extend a great way, and they have a long neck. The males have under their bills, a puff of ſkin, round as a ball, and red as ſcarlet. This is the lighteſt of all ſea-birds. It never reſts upon the water, yet is ſeen three hundred leagues from land, whither, 'tis affirmed, that it returns every evening to rooſt.

The booby is ſomething larger, but more compact. It is white, mingled with grey, and dives when purſuing its prey, which is fiſh. The point of its beak hooks downwards, and the ſides of it are full of little ſharp points, which aſſiſt it in ſeizing its prey. The frigate-bird is at war with the booby, which is better furniſhed with arms, although the former has more ſwiftneſs and cunning. When the booby has filled its craw with fiſh, the frigate attacks it, and makes it give up its ſpoils, which it receives in the air.

THE *goelettes*, are found in great flocks, denote ſhallow water, and that the land is near. They are white, and by their flight and ſhape may be taken for pigeons.

THE *envergure* * is a bird ſomething bigger, of the height of a large duck. It is white under the belly, and of a greyiſh brown on the wings and back. It takes its name from the great extent of its wings.

THE *damiers*, are found only near the Cape of Good Hope. They are as big as pigeons, have a black head and tail, a white belly, the back and wings marked regularly with black and white, like the checks of a draught-board.

AFTER the *damiers* we ſaw the *mouton-de-cap*; 'tis a bird ſomething larger than a gooſe, has a fleſh-coloured beak, very extenſive wings, mixed with grey and white. They are ſeldom found but in the latitude of the Cape of Good Hope. I have ſeen all theſe birds at reſt upon the water except the *frigate-bird* and the *envergure*. The ſight of them is an indication of the latitude, when we have been many days without taking an obſervation, or when the currents have made us loſe way in our longitude. It is to be wiſhed that able ſeamen would give the world their obſervations hereon. Some ſpecies do not go far from the land, and rooſt there every night. *Goelettes* ſeen out at ſea, are ſigns of ſome land, or broken rocks being near; but the *manches-de-velours*, or *ſea-mews*, are a certain token of its neighbourhood.

THERE are alſo ſome ſpecies of bladed graſs, or floating *algæ*, which ſhould be attended to. Theſe

* Not mentioned in the Encyclopedie *T.*

ſeveral

ſeveral notices may be of uſe, inſtead of a method which is not yet diſcovered, of determining the longitude. They make an obſervation of the variation morning and evening; but this is not to be depended on. One cannot every day ſee the ſun riſe and ſet; moreover the variation, which is the declination of the needle, varies from one year to another under the ſame meridian.

JUNE, 1768.

THE 1ſt, the weſterly winds having announced themſelves, we now hoped we ſhould ſoon double the Cape.

THE 2d, the neceſſary precautions for this purpoſe were taken. New cordage was put to the wheel of the rudder, and ſome additional ones to the ſhrouds, for ſecuring the maſts. We bent four new ſails. The boats, and all things that were moveable on board, were ſtrongly laſhed. The wind was very freſh. We ſaw ſome birds, but the *frigates* no longer appeared.

The 3d, 4th, and 5th,—each day the wind was very freſh, except yeſterday when it ſubſided a little. We ſaw every day a prodigious number of *goelettes*, *moutons*, and *damiers*, and the Cape reed*, which reſembles the long trumpet uſed by ſhepherds. The ſailors make a kind of trumpets of theſe hollow ſtalks. The ſea was covered with ſurf, another ſign of our being near the Cape. Fifteen men are rendered unfit for ſervice by the ſcurvy.

THE 7th at noon, a bird of the ſize of a gooſe, with ſhort wings, tawny coloured and brown, a head like a hen, a ſhort tail, ſhaped like a leaf of trefoil, has fixed upon our maſts for ſome time. By all the bearings, we ought to find the Cape hereabouts. Saw the ſame birds.

THE 9th, diſorders and dejection increaſe in the ſhip. One of the mates died of the ſcurvy.

* Engliſh ſailors call it trunk-weed. *T.*

THE

The 12th, as the ſea appeared greeniſh, we ſounded, but found no bottom. The wind very freſh, and a great ſea.

The 13th, we at length came into ſoundings of ninety-five fathoms, a muddy and greeniſh bottom. This rejoiced us exceedingly. The great depth convinced us that we had loſt way to the weſtward. We ſaw two ſhips, one a-ſtern, the other over our ſtarboard cat-head. The ſoundings aſcertain where we are, but inform us, that we have miſreckoned above two hundred leagues in our journal.

The 15th, blew freſh. The veſſel a-ſtern hoiſted Engliſh colours, and ſoon paſſed by us at about a league and a half to leeward. The other hoiſted French colours, and as ſhe was before the wind, ſhe lowered her ſails in order to join us, bearing up as near as ſhe could. Our captain did not think proper to come to, ſhe proved to be the Digue man of war, that ſailed a month before us. Towards evening ſhe hoiſted all her ſails, and ſteered in our courſe.

The 17th, it proved calm. We ſaw ſome whales and *dorados*.

The 18th in the morning we had a gale of wind, that obliged us to remain till eleven at night under our mizen. There roſe at the extremity of each wave a white powder like the duſt blown by the wind along a road. At ſeven o'clock we ſhipped a ſea at the great cabbin windows. At eight o'clock it hailed, and at midnight the weather grew fine.

The 22d, the wind very freſh and a rolling ſea. The opinion of the Ancients that the weather was calm during the ſolſtice, was erroneous. I have this

afternoon read an obſervation in Dampier's voyages, that the ſun's diſappearing at about three in the afternoon behind a range of high and thick clouds, is a ſign of a violent ſtorm. When I went upon deck, the ſky diſcovered all theſe ſigns deſcribed by Dampier.

THE 23d, at half paſt twelve in the night, a great ſea beat in four of the five great cabbin-windows, though the dead-lights were barred like a St. Andrew's croſs. The veſſel pitched, as if ſhe would have ſtood an end in the water. Hearing the noiſe, I opened the door of my chamber, which was inſtantly filled with water and the furniture that floated about. The water ran out at the door of the great cabbin like the ſluice of mill; above thirty hogſheads of water came in by this accident. The carpenters were called, lights were brought, and new boards nailed againſt the windows as quickly as poſſible. We now ran under a mizen, and the wind and ſea were truly frightful.

THIS diſorder was ſcarcely put to rights, before a large cheſt that ſerved for a table, full of ſalt and bottles of champagne, broke its laſhings. The rolling of the ſhip threw it to and fro like a die. This enormous box weighed many tons, and threatened us with being cruſhed to pieces in our rooms. At laſt it burſt open, and the bottles rolling about and breaking, cauſed a confuſion that is inexpreſſible. The carpenters returned, and with the greateſt difficulty replaced and faſtened it.

THE rolling of the ſhip not ſuffering me to ſleep, I lay down upon the bed in my boots and morning-gown: my dog ſeemed in the greateſt fright, and while I amuſed myſelf with ſoothing him, I ſaw a flaſh of light'ning through the crevis of the porthole,

and

and heard it thunder. 'Twas about half paſt three in the morning. In a moment, a ſecond clap of thunder broke, and the dog began to fly about and howl. The light'ning flaſhed again in an inſtant. Thunder immediately following, I heard 'em cry out upon deck, that ſome ſhip was in danger; in fact the noiſe was like the report of a cannon fired near us, as it did not roll at all. Perceiving a ſtrong ſmell of ſulphur, I went upon deck, and immediately felt it exceſſively cold. Every thing was ſilent, and the night ſo dark, I could diſtinguiſh nothing. I preſently perceived ſomebody near me, and aſked, what was the matter? The man anſwered, "They are "carrying the Quarter-maſter to his birth; he has "fainted away, and ſo has the Pilot. The thunder "has fallen upon the ſhip, and ſhivered the main-"maſt." Indeed, I found the main-top-ſail yard was fallen upon the main-top. Neither maſt nor rigging appeared, the crew were all retired to the Council-Chamber *.

THEY made a ring upon the fore-caſtle. The thunder had deſcended ſo far along the maſt. A woman who had juſt lain in, had ſeen a globe of fire at the foot of her bed; yet nobody could diſcover any trace of the fire. — Day light was looked for with impatience.

AT day break I again went upon deck. Some very black clouds, appeared, and others of a copper colour. The wind was weſterly, where the horizon appeared of a flaming red, as if the ſun was going to riſe in that quarter. The Eaſt was totally black. The ſea formed monſtrous waves, that roſe like pointed mountains, compoſed of a number of ſmaller hills; on their ſummits were raiſed ſpouts of foam,

* There is no Council-Chamber in our Engliſh ſhips, nor do I know what part is ſo called by the French in theirs. *T.*

coloured

coloured like ſo many rainbows. They were thrown ſo high, as to appear from the quarter-deck, to be higher than the tops. The wind made ſo much noiſe in the rigging, that we could ſcarcely hear each other ſpeak. We ran before the wind under a mizen only. A piece of the top-maſt hung from the end of the main-maſt, which was ſplit in eight places to a level with the deck. Five of the iron rings with which it was bound, were melted. The gangways were covered with the broken pieces of the top, and main top-maſt. At the riſing of the ſun, the wind alſo roſe with a redoubled and inexpreſſible fury. The ſhip no longer to be guided by the helm, went which way ſoever the wind or the waves drove her. The mizen-ſail having gibed its braces, broke ſoon after; the force with which it was continually ſtriking againſt the maſt, we feared would have broken the latter by the board. In an inſtant, the forecaſtle was under water. The waves broke over the larboard cat-head, in ſo much, that the bowſprit was not to be ſeen. Clouds of ſurf inundated even as high as the poop. The ſhip, by not ſteering, preſented her ſide to the waves, and at every roll took in water even to the foot of the main-maſt, and roſe again with the utmoſt difficulty.

THE Captain in this moment of danger, called out to the Pilots to put before the wind; but the veſſel could not be in the leaſt affected by the helm. He ordered the ſailors to reef the mizen, which the wind was carrying away piece-meal; the poor fellows were ſheltering themſelves under the quarter-deck, ſome crying, others fallen on their knees, and praying. I crept along the larboard gangway, griping faſt by the tackling, and was followed by a Dominican who was chaplain of the ſhip, a paſſenger, and by ſeveral of the ſeamen, and we at length did reef the ſail, though

above

above half of it was carried away. They wanted to have bent a ſtay-ſail, in order to put before the wind, but it was torn like a ſheet of paper.

WE remained then like a log, rolling about in a moſt frightful manner; having one time let go the tackle I held by, I ſlid as far as the foot of the main-maſt, where the water was up to my knees. In ſhort, next to God, we were indebted for our ſafety, to the ſtrength of the ſhip, and to her having three decks, without which ſhe muſt have filled. Thus we were toſſed about till the evening, when the ſtorm abated. The moveable furniture was almoſt entirely topſy-turvy, or broken to pieces: and I more than once found myſelf upright on my feet upon the wainſcot of my cabbin.

SUCH was the tribute that we paid in the ſtreights of Mozambique *. The paſſage through which is more dreaded by ſeamen, than doubling the Cape of Good Hope. The Officers declared, they never ſaw ſo great a ſea. All the upper works of the ſhip were ſo ſhaken by it, that into the joints of the pilaſters of the great cabbin, I put mutton bones, which were cruſhed to pieces by the play of the timbers.

THE 24th, at four in the morning it fell calm, the ſea was ſtill very high. The people worked hard all day, in bringing the main-yard to its right place, and in fitting two fiſhes to ſtrengthen the main-maſt. The effects of the light'ning are not to be deſcribed. The

* In this ſtrait the Aurora Frigate, with the Eaſt-India Superviſors on board, is ſuppoſed to have been loſt. The Portugueze have a large ſettlement at Mozambique, which is ſituated on an iſland in 15 deg. S. The town is populous and well fortified; and the harbour ſafe and commodious. *T.*

THE

mainmaſt is ſplit in a zig-zag, five feet of the maſt immediately under the top, is ſplintered, forward, or towards the head of the ſhip; then five feet on the afterſide, or towards the ſtern, is ſplintered; and ſo five feet alternately, the whole length of the maſt to the deck; ſo that the ſound on the one ſide, anſwers to the ſhattered on the other. In theſe cracks I could not perceive any ſmell or blackneſs, the wood being of it's uſual colour.

WE ſaw ſome Moutons de Cap. The weather killed the remains of our live ſtock, and doubled the number of men ſick of the ſcurvy.

THE 25th, was ſpent in belaying and faſtening the two fiſhes round the maſt; they were two pieces of timber, forty-five feet long, hollowed out in grooves, to fit the circumference of the maſt. Every man put his hand to this work, on account of the ſickly ſtate of the crew. A Whale paſſed us, within piſtol ſhot, it was ſcarcely the length of the long boat.

THE 26th, middling weather; *Te deum* was ſung according to cuſtom, to thank God for having paſſed the Cape, and the Straits of Mozambique.

THE 27th, we completed the maſt ſo far, that it would carry the main ſail. One man died of the ſcurvy; and twenty-one menwere rendered unfit for ſervice by ſickneſs.

THE 29th, a child of only eight days old died of the ſcurvy. There are now twenty-eight ſailors in the Lazarette. To make out the watch, we have been forced to take the domeſtick ſervants that are on board, and alſo the paſſengers, that are not of the Great Cabbin.

THE

THE 30th, our uneaſineſs was encreaſed, by the melancholy condition of the crew. Here the weſterly winds are at an end. We keep in a high latitude, that we may have the S. W. winds which blow conſtantly hereabouts, and endeavour to keep to windward of the iſland of Rodorigue, to make the Iſle of France with the greater certainty.

OBSERVATIONS that might be of uſe for the better Government of Seamen.

THERE did not ſeem to me to be a proper ſubordination among the officers; the ſuperiors are afraid of the intereſt of their inferiors. The chief part of theſe appointments being obtained by favour, I do not think that an authority can be eſtabliſhed among them as it ought to be; and the evil being dependent upon the manners of the perſons concerned, is, in my opinion, without remedy.

No ſhip ſhould ſtay more than three months at ſea, without going into port. The ſailors have not water enough for a longer trip, in theſe hot climates; being frequently reduced to half-a-pint a day. Could not that part of the ſhip, where the ballaſt is put, be divided into leaden ciſterns and filled with freſh water; or could not ſome kind of wax or maſtic be found out, with which the caſks might be done over to prevent the water from corrupting. It is ſometimes ſo much tainted, and ſo full of worms, as to be really intolerable.

As for the ſalt water, that is rendered freſh by a machine, it is not thought wholeſome: beſides, a great deal of ſea-coal muſt be taken on board, which occupies

occupies too much room, and is ſubject to take fire; and the additional dangerous inconvenience of keeping a Furnace burning night and day.*

THE ſeamen are very ill victualled; their biſcuit is full of worms; the ſalt beef, in a ſhort time, becomes both a diſagreeable and unwholeſome food. Could not proviſions be dreſſed and preſerved in fat. The Great Cabbin was ſerved with meat ſo prepared, which kept as well as the ſalted beef.

WHEN on ſhore, the ſailors will ſpend as much money in a week, as they have been a year in earning. I ſhould think each man might be provided with proper cloathing, which they ſhould be obliged to take care of, by the frequent reviews of its condition by proper officers. Such a precaution would certainly, in ſome degree, prevent their extravagance. Several other regulations might be thought of, which properly attended to by the officers, would tend much to their cleanlineſs and decent appearance. The major part of theſe poor fellows need always be under a tutor.

* Experience has ſhewn, that Dr. Irvin's method is of great utility. *T.*

JULY,

JULY, 1768.

THE 3d. This evening one of the carpenters died of the ſcurvy; forty people are now ill of it, and it makes a ſenſible progreſs, owing to the exhalations from the hold filled with maſts, that have for a long time been layng in mud.

THE 9th, one of the ſailors upon the watch died ſuddenly. We have all been very faint and weak today; ſome have had vertigoes and ſickneſs at their ſtomachs. We are, notwithſtanding, more than one hundred leagues to windward of any known land.

THE 11th, fair wind; ſixty-ſix of the men are now ſick in their beds; if we ſhould remain eight days longer at ſea, we muſt infallibly periſh.

THE 12th, fine weather and ſea; there are no more than three foremaſt men to each watch; the officers and paſſengers help to work the ſhip.

THE 13th, at half paſt eight this morning, land appeared. We are ſo caſt down, that the news rejoices no body. Eighty men are now ill with the diſtemper.

THE 14th, on approaching the land, many of the people found themſelves ſick. I felt uneaſineſs all over me, and ſweated abundantly. We hoiſted the colours and fired guns for aſſiſtance; but a pilot alone came on board. He told us of the differences among the chief people of the iſland, about which, I ſuppoſe, he thought us very anxious: on the other hand, many of the people on board were of opinion, that the

the complaints and miſeries we had laboured under, would be a matter of great concern to the inhabitants on ſhore.

We preſently left to our right, two ſmall inhabited iſlands, called Round Iſland, and the Iſle of Serpents: we next paſſed within gun-ſhot of *Coin de Mire*, another iſland on the left. We kept at a good diſtance from the ſhore, on account of the ſhoal, at *Point aux Cannoniers*.

At half paſt one, in the afternoon, we entered the harbour; two hours after, I landed, thanking God for having delivered me from the dangers and fatigues of ſo dreadful a voyage.

We were at ſea four months and twelve days, without touching at any port. According to my journal, we have ſailed about three thouſand eight hundred marine, or four thouſand ſeven hundred common leagues: and have loſt eleven perſons, including the three men carried away by the ſea, and one who died as he was going aſhore.

OBSERVATIONS on the SCURVY.

THE ſcurvy is occaſioned by the bad quality of the air and of the proviſions. The officers, who are better fed and better lodged than the ſailors, are the laſt attacked by this diſorder, which affects even the animals on board: my dog was very much troubled with it. There is no abſolute cure for it, but the air of the land and the uſe of freſh vegetables, although there are ſome palliatives which may moderate it's effects; as the uſe of rice, acid liquors, coffee,

coffee, and abſtinence from all ſalted proviſions. Great virtues are attributed to the uſe of turtle, but like other prejudices, this is adopted by ſeamen upon ſlight grounds only. At the Cape of Good Hope, where there are no turtles, the ſcurvy is cured as quickly as in the hoſpital at the Iſle of France, where the patient is fed with broths of this animal. On our arrival, almoſt every body uſed this remedy; but not being fond of turtle, I did not eat of it, but of freſh vegetables; I was well before any of them.

THE ſcurvy's firſt ſymptoms is a general laſſitude; the ſick perſon wiſhes for reſt, is uneaſy in his mind, and diſguſted with every thing; all day long he is in diſquiet, and is only relieved from it by the night: it's next, are red ſpots on his breaſt and legs, and bleeding ulcers in the gums. There are frequently no external ſymptoms; but, if a man gets the ſlighteſt wound imaginable, it is incurable, while at ſea; and makes the moſt rapid progreſs. I myſelf had a very ſlight wo[illegible]d at the end of my finger; in three weeks the ſore had taken off the ſkin entirely; and notwithſtanding all the remedies that were applied, extended itſelf to my hand. A few days after my landing, it healed of itſelf. Before the ſick were landed, they took care to expoſe them for a whole day to the air from the ſhore. Notwithſtanding theſe precautions, it coſt one man his life, who was not able to bear the change.

I CANNOT deſcribe to you the miſerable ſituation we were in at our arrival. Figure to yourſelf a ſhip, with it's main maſt ſhattered to pieces by light'ning, with a waſt upon it's enſign, and firing minute-guns as ſignals of diſtreſs; ſailors more like ſpectres than men, ſitting upon deck; the ſcuttles all open and emitting a vapour that infected the air; the forecaſtle

and poop covered with ſick men, expoſed there for the benefit of the ſun, and who died even while ſpeaking to us. I ſhall never forget a lad of eighteen years old, to whom I had promiſed ſome lemonade the evening before. I was ſeeking for him among the reſt, when they ſhewed him to me, lying dead in the cook-room.

LETTER V.

NAUTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

BEFORE I give you an account of the Iſle of France, I ſhall add to my journal the obſervations of the moſt able ſeamen upon the voyage we have made.

REGULAR as the trade winds are in general, they are, notwithſtanding, variable along the coaſt, and in the neighbourhood of iſlands.

A BREEZE blows off the land almoſt every night, along the ſhores of the great continents. This wind blowing in a different direction from the ſea breeze, brings the clouds together into one long motionleſs range, which veſſels rarely fail ſeeing as they approach the land.

NEAR the coaſts, it is in general, ſtormy, eſpecially in the neighbourhod of iſlands. The winds

in

in theſe parts vary much. At the Canaries, the S. and S. E. winds blow ſometimes for eight days ſucceſſively.

THE trade winds are firſt met with, about twenty-eight degrees North latitude; but they ſeldom continue ſo far as the Line. An experienced ſeaman has given me the following account of the ceaſing of the trade winds, which he has with much labour collected from more than two hundred and fifty journals of this voyage:

In January, between the 6th and 4th degrees of North latitude.
In February, between the 5th and 3d degrees.
In March and April, between the 5th and 2d degrees.
In May, between the 6th and 4th degrees.
In June, in the 10th degree.
In July, in the 12th degree.
In Auguſt and September, between the 14th and 13th degrees.
And during the months of October, November, and December, they blow as far as the Line.*

† BETWEEN the trade and the general winds, by which is meant the trade winds ſouthward of the Line, the wind is variable and ſtormy. The general winds extend much farther than the trade; they reach as far as twenty-eight degrees ſouth. Beyond which

* The ſouthern trade wind has been known to blow farther north than the Line; and the northern, at other times, to be extended to the ſouthward of the Line: but this rarely happens. *T.*

† B. Varenius, in his *Geographia Generalis*, gives a particular account of the winds, (*cap.* 20. *and* 21.) and of the variation of the needle, (*cap.* 38.)—and in the appendix prefixed by Sir *Iſaac Newton*, and Dr. *Jurin*, to the edition they publiſhed in 1712, (*page* 31 *and* 49.) are collected Dr. *Halley*'s obſervations upon the ſame ſubjects. *T.*

latitude the winds vary more than in the ſeas of Europe; and the higher the latitude the more violent they are; blowing generally from the N. to N. W.; and from the N. W. to the S. S. W.—when they get round to the S. a calm ſucceeds.

NEAR the Cape of Good Hope, S. E. and E. S. E. winds are frequently met with. It is a general maxim to keep to the windward of the place intended to be made; yet not too much ſo, as the ſhip would make too much leeway. It is beſt to croſs the Line as much to the Eaſtward as poſſible.

If a ſhip is in want of proviſions, ſhe may be better ſupplied at the Cape de Verd Iſlands than at Braſil, where they are very dear; beſides that, the air of the place is very unwholſome. Turtle is catched in great plenty at the iſland of Triſtan d'Aconia, but water is hard to be got, on account of the trees, which grow in the ſea.

IT is dangerous to put in at the *Cape of Good Hope* from April to September; but the anchorage is perfectly ſafe at *Falſe-bay*, which is very little diſtant. If a veſſel miſſes the Iſle of France, it may put in at Madagaſcar, at Port Dauphin, or Bay of Antongil; but there are dangerous epidemical diſtempers, and hurricanes on that coaſt, which laſt from October till May.

RETURNING to Europe, there is St. Helena, an Engliſh ſettlement; and the iſland of Aſcenſion, where, however, nothing can be got but turtle. In time of war, the two iſlands are commonly cruizing ſtations, all ſhips from the other ſide of the Cape endeavour to make them, in order to aſcertain their route.

THE

THE charts moſt in repute are Monſieur Dapre's; ſailors are alſo much indebted to the learned and modeſt Abbé de Caille. But the geography of theſe parts is yet very imperfect. The longitude of the Canaries, and of the Cape de Verd iſlands, is not well laid down. Between Cape Blanco and Cape Verd, the chart ſays, there are thirty-nine leagues difference, although there really are not twenty.

A SHOAL is ſuſpected to be at about twenty minutes South of the Line, and about twenty-three degrees ten minutes longitude: in 1764, two French ſhips touched the bottom.

SEAMEN are liable to be led into great errors by the currents. I am of opinion, that nothing certain relative to them can be determined upon, 'till a method is diſcovered, of aſcertaining the quantity of a ſhip's leeway: even the angle ſhe forms with her Wake, will not lead to a deciſion of this matter; becauſe the ſhip and her trace have one cauſe, the ſhip's motion.

THE hardineſs of the navigators, who firſt made theſe voyages, without experience and without charts, cannot be ſufficiently admired. Thoſe of the preſent day have much more information, and leſs reſolution. Navigation is become a mere routine. Ships ſail at a particular ſeaſon, make the ſame places, and ſteer the ſame courſes. It were to be wiſhed, that ſome veſſels might be riſked in making diſcoveries, that might aſſure the ſafety of others.

LETTER VI.

THE Iſle of France was diſcovered by a Portugueze, of the family of Maſcarenhas, who called it *Iſle de Cerné*. It was afterwards poſſeſſed by the Dutch, who gave it the name of *Mauritius*. They abandoned it in 1712, and ſoon after the French, inhabitants of the Iſle of Bourbon, which is only forty leagues diſtant, came and ſettled themſelves there.

THERE are two ports in this iſland; that on the S. E. where the Dutch ſettlement was, and where remains of their buildings are ſtill ſeen, is the principal port. It may be entered before the wind; but it is difficult to get out of it: the winds being almoſt ever at S. E.

THE ſmaller port, or Port Louis, is to the N. W. a ſhip may go in or out of it, large, before the wind. It's latitude is twenty degrees ten minutes S, and it's longitude, from the meridian of Paris, fifty-five degrees E. This is the capital of the iſland, though ſituated in the moſt diſagreeable part of it. The town, called alſo the Camp, and which has ſcarcely the appearance of a market town, is built at the bottom of the port, and at the opening of a valley, which is about three quarters of a league long, and eight hundred or a thouſand yards wide. This valley is formed by a chain of high mountains, covered with rocks; but without trees or buſhes. The ſides of theſe mountains are covered ſix months in the year, with a burning herb, which makes the country

country appear black, like a colliery. The edge of the rocks, which form this diſmal vale, is broken and craggy. The higheſt part is at the extremity, and terminates in a rock, ſtanding by itſelf, which they call the *Pouce*. This part, however, has a few trees; and there iſſues from it a rivulet, which runs through the town; but the water is not good to drink.

As for the town or camp, it conſiſts of wooden houſes of one ſtory high; each houſe ſtands by itſelf, and is incloſed in palliſades. The ſtreets are regular enough, but are neither paved nor planted with trees. The ground is every where ſo covered, and as it were ſtaked with rocks, that there is no ſtirring without danger of breaking one's neck. The town is neither walled nor fortified in the leaſt, except that on the left, when looking to the ſea, there is a ſort of intrenchment of ſtone, reaching from the mountain to the harbour; on this ſame ſide is Fort-Blanc, that defends its entrance; on the other ſide is a battery upon the Iſle of *Tonnelliers*.

According, to the meaſurement of the Abbé de Caille, the Iſle of France is ninety thouſand, ſix hundred and ſixty-eight fathoms in circumference; it's greateſt diameter is thirty-one thouſand, eight hundred and ninety fathoms from N. to S.; and twenty-two thouſand, one hundred and twenty-four from E. to W.; its ſuperficial content is four hundred thirty-two thouſand, ſix hundred and eighty acres, of one hundred perches the acre; and twenty feet the perch.

THE N. W. part of the iſland is apparently level, and the S. W. covered with ridges of mountains, from three hundred to three hundred and fifty fathom

high. The higheſt of all is four hundred and twenty-four fathom, and ſtands at the mouth of the river *Noire*. The moſt remarkable, called *Pieterboth*, is four hundred and twenty toiſes high; it is terminated by an obeliſk, which is again covered with a cubical rock, upon which no perſon has ever yet been. At a diſtance, this pyramid and it's capital, reſemble the ſtatue of a woman.

THE iſland is watered by above ſixty rivulets, ſome of which have no water in the dry ſeaſon, eſpecially ſince ſo much timber has been cut down. The interior part of the iſland is full of ponds, and in this part it rains nearly all the year round, the clouds being ſtopped by the mountains, and the woods at the top of them.

I CANNOT give you a more perfect account of a place in which I am but juſt arrived. I expect to paſs a few days in the country, and will endeavour to deſcribe to you what relates to the ſoil of this iſland, before I ſpeak of it's inhabitants.

PORT LOUIS,
Aug. 6, 1768.

LET-

LETTER VII.

Of the Soil and natural Productions of the ISLE of FRANCE.

EVERY thing here differs from what is ſeen in Europe, even the herbage of the country. To begin with the ſoil: It is almoſt every where of a reddiſh colour, and mixed with veins of iron, which are frequently found near the ſurface, in the form of grains, the ſize of a pea. In the drier parts, eſpecially near the town, the ground is very hard. It reſembles pipe-clay, and to make trenches in it, I have ſeen them cut it with axes, as they do lead. As ſoon as it rains, it becomes ſoft and tenacious; notwithſtanding they have not yet been able to make it into bricks.

THERE is no real ſand in the ſoil. That which is found on the ſhore, is compoſed of fragments of madrepores and ſhells, which will calcine in the fire.

THE ground is almoſt every where covered with rocks, from the ſize of one's fiſt to a ton weight. They are full of holes, the bottom of which is in the form of a lentil.

MANY of theſe rocks are formed of concentrical laminæ, like an onion. Some of them are in large maſſes, that adhere together. Others ſeem as if they had been broken, and were again joined together. The iſland is in a manner paved with theſe rocks, and the mountains are formed entirely of theſe ſtrata, which are oblique to the horizon, although parallel

to

to each other. They are of an iron grey colour, vitrify in the fire, and contain a great deal of iron ore. I ſaw at the foundry, ſome grains of beautiful copper and lead, that were taken from ſome of the fiſſures in the rocks, but in a very ſmall quantity. Experiments of this nature afford no encouragement here. The mineral appears to be too much diſperſed. In the broken pieces of theſe ſtones, there are little cavities criſtalized, ſome of which contain a down *, that is white and very fine.

I KNOW only of three ſpecies of herbs or gramen, that are natural to the ſoil.

ALONG the ſea-ſhore is found a ſort of turf, that grows in beds, very thick and elaſtic. Its leaf is very ſmall, and ſo ſharp pointed, as to prick through one's clothes. The cattle will not touch it.

IN the hotteſt part of the iſland, the paſtures are of a kind of dog's graſs, which ſpreads much upon the ground, and puts out little branches from the joints. This herb is very hard. The oxen like it very well, if not too dry.

THE beſt herb grows in the airy and windward ſide of the iſland. 'Tis a gramen, with large leaves, and is green and tender all the year.

THE other ſpecies of herbs and ſhrubs that are known, are, a plant that yields for fruit, a huſk filled with a kind of ſilk, of which an advantageous uſe might be made.

A KIND of aſparagus, prickly, and that grows above twelve feet high, round the trees, as the bram-

* Probably a ſpecies of the Aſbeſtos. T.

ble

ble or briar. It is not yet known whether this is good to eat.

A kind of mallow ſhrub with ſmall leaves, that grows in the paths, and ſides of the roads. There is alſo a kind of thiſtle with yellow flowers, the ſeeds of which kill the birds that eat them; and a plant that is like the lilly, bearing long leaves. It grows in marſhy ground, and has a flower of a grateful ſmell.

UPON walls, and by the ſides of the roads I found ſome tufts of a plant, whoſe flower reſembles the plain red July-flower; It has a bad ſmell, and this ſingular property, that only one flower flouriſhes upon each branch at one time.

AT the foot of the neighbouring mountains, there grows a ſweet baſil, the ſmell of it is like that of a July-flower. Its ſtalk is ligneous. It is of a healing quality.

THE *Raquettes*, of which they here make very dangerous hedges, bear a yellow flower, marbled with red. This plant is ſtuck full of very ſharp prickles, that grow upon the leaves; and alſo upon the fruit. The leaves are very thick. The fruit is never uſed, and is of a ſour taſte.

THE *Veloutier* grows upon the ſand on the ſea-ſhore. Its branches have a down upon them, like that of velvet. The leaves are entirely covered with glittering filaments. It bears flowers in cluſters. This ſhrub exhales an odour, that at a diſtance is agreeable, leſs ſo when you draw near, and when quite cloſe is perfectly loathſome.

THERE

THERE is a kind of plant, half bramble, half ſhrub, that produces in pods, briſtled with prickles, a ſort of nut, very ſmooth and hard, of a pearl colour grey, and the ſize of a muſquet-ball. Its kernel is very bitter. Theſe nuts are good for the venereal diſeaſe.

IN the parts of the iſland that are cleared, there grows a great number of a kind of ſhrub, that has large leaves, in the ſhape of a heart. Its ſmell is ſweet enough, and like that of balm, whoſe name it bears. I know of no uſe made of it, except in baths.

ANOTHER plant equally uſeleſs, is the falſe potatoe, which grows twining along the ſea-ſide. It ſpreads on the ground like the *liſeron*. Its flowers are red, and like a bell. It thrives in the ſand.

UPON the borders of the woods is found a ligneous herb called, *Pannier-graſs* *. They have attemptnd to make thread and cloth of it, which is not bad. Its leaves are ſmall. Taken in barley-water, they are good for complaints in the breaſt.

THERE is a great variety of ſhrubs all comprized under the general name of †*liannes*, ſome of which are as thick as a man's leg, and grow round the trees, making the trunks look like a maſt furniſhed with rigging. They, however, ſupport the trees againſt the hurricanes, of whoſe violence I have ſeen frequent proofs. When they fell timber in the woods, they cut about two hundred trees near the root, which remain upright till the *liannes*, which hold them, are cut down alſo. When this is done, one whole part of the foreſt ſeems to fall at once, making a moſt

* Herbe a pannier. *T.* † A Rattan, or Supple Jack. *T.*

horrid

horrid craſh. Cords are made of their bark, ſtronger than of hemp.

There are many ſhrubs which bear a flower like that of the box-tree.

A PRICKLY and ſpungy ſhrub, with a red flower, in a hoop, and ſcolloped. Its leaf is large and round. The fiſhermen uſe the ſtalk of it (which is very light) inſtead of cork.

ANOTHER ſhrub, which is a very pretty one, called, † *bois-de-demoiſelle.* Its leaf is ſcolloped at the edge, like that of the aſh, and its branches ornamented with ſmall red ſeeds.

BEFORE I proceed, you will obſerve, that I know nothing of botany. I deſcribe things as I ſee them; but if you will rely upon my opinion, I declare to you, that I think every thing inferior to the productions of Europe.

THE meadows do not produce a ſingle flower, but are entirely covered with ſmall ſtones, and overgrown with an herb as hard, and as tough as hemp. No plant bears flowers of a pleaſant ſmell, nor is any ſhrub in the Iſland to be compared to our white thorn. The liannes have not the fragrancy of the honeyſuckle or ivy. Not one violet in all the woods. As to the trees, they have large whitiſh trunks, that are bare, except a little kind of noſegay of leaves of a dull green. I will deſcribe them in my next letter.

PORT-LOUIS, ISLE-OF-FRANCE, *Sept.* 15*th*, 1768.

† Lady's Wood.

LETTER VIII.

SOME days ago I perceived a large tree in the middle of ſome rocks, and being deſirous of cutting a piece with my knife, was ſurprized at the whole blade entering without my uſing the leaſt force. It was of a ſubſtance like a turnip, and of a very diſagreeable taſte; for ſome hours after, (although I did not ſwallow any part of it) my throat was much enflamed, and felt as if pricked by pins. This tree is called *mapou*, and is looked upon as poiſonous.

THE trees of this country take their names in general, from the fancy or caprice of the inhabitants.

THE *bois-de-canelle*, which is not like the real cinnamon-tree, is one of the largeſt in the iſland. It is the beſt I have ſeen for joiner's work, and reſembles walnut-tree, both in colour and veins. When it is worked green, it ſmells like human excrement, and like the bloſſoms of the real cinnamon. This is the only reſemblance I could perceive between them. The ſeed of it is inveloped in a red ſkin, which has an acid, yet not a diſagreeable taſte.

The ſtinking-wood, deſervedly ſo called from its horrid ſmell, is very good for carpenter's uſe.

THE iron-wood, its trunk ſeems blended with the roots, and ſhoots up in a kind of ribs or ſpars, like ſo many boards. It turns the edge of the axe that fells it.

THE

THE ebony-wood; its leaves are large, the lower ſide white, the upper of a dingy green. The center only of this tree is black, the ſap and the bark being white. In a trunk, from which may be cut a timber ſix inches ſquare, there is frequently no more of real ebony, than two inches ſquare. This wood, if worked while green, ſmells like human excrement, and its flowers like the July-flower; the very reverſe of the cinnamon, whoſe flowers are ſtinking, and the wood and bark of a pleaſant ſmell. The ebony bears a fruit like a medlar, full of viſcous juice, that is ſweet and pleaſant taſted.

THERE is another ſort of ebony here, veined with black.

THE citron-tree bears fruit in cool and damp places only; the citrons are ſmall, but full of juice.

THE orange-tree alſo thrives in a ſoil of this kind, its fruit is bitter and ſharp-taſted. Many of them grow in the neighbourhood of the Great-Port; yet I doubt if theſe two ſpecies are natural to the iſland. The ſweet orange is very rare, even in gardens.

THERE is found here, but rarely, a ſpecies of the *ſandal-wood*. Somebody gave me a piece of it, which was of a greyiſh white. It had a faint ſmell.

THE *vacoa*, is a kind of ſmall palm-tree, whoſe leaves grow ſpirally round the trunk; they make mats and bags of them.

THE *latanier*, is a large kind of palm-tree, it bears at the top, one leaf only, in the ſhape of a fan, with which they cover their houſes.

THE

THE *palm-tree* riſes in the foreſt above all the other trees. It bears at the head a cluſter of palms, whence there iſſues a ſhoot, which is all this tree affords fit to be eaten; and to get at this, the tree muſt be cut down. This ſhoot, which they call the cabbage, is formed of young leaves, rolled one over the other, very tender, and of a very pleaſant taſte.

The *manglier*, or *mangrove**, grows entirely in the ſea. Its roots and branches creep along, and interweave themſelves in the ſand, ſo that it is impoſſible to pull them up. Its wood is red, and ſtains of an ugly colour.

I TOOK notice that the greater part of theſe trees have but a very thin bark, ſome of them even have nothing but a ſort of ſkin over them, differing widely from the trees in the North, which nature has furniſhed with a variety of coats, to protect them from the cold. Moſt of them have their roots upon the ſurface of the earth, and twiſt round the rocks as they ſhoot up. They are but ſhort; their heads little, furniſhed with leaves, and are very heavy; which with the *liannes* that grow round them, is their only ſupport againſt the hurricanes, which would elſe preſently tear up the firs and cheſnuts.

As to the uſes they are fit for, none can compare for durability and ſolidity to the oak, to the elm for pliancy, to the fir for the lightneſs and length of its timber, or to the cheſnut for its uſefulneſs in general. Their foliage has the ſame diſagreeable quality as is

* The mangrove is alſo called *paletuvier*; its wood is very proper for building, and of its bark, the people in ſome part of the Eaſt-Indies make clothes. The elephants are extremely fond of the young leaves of this tree, and eat them with avidity. T.

com-

common to every tree, whoſe leaves laſt the year round, being hard, and of an ugly dark green. Their wood is heavy, brittle, and eaſily rots. Thoſe that in other reſpects are fit for cabinet-work, ſoon turn black, when expoſed to the air, which gives their furniture a very diſagreeable look.

ALONG the margins of the rivulets which flow through the woods, are the moſt pleaſing retreats imaginable. The waters run through the midſt of the rocks; in one part gliding along in ſilence,—in another, falling precipitately from a height, with a confuſed and murmuring noiſe. The borders of theſe ravines are covered with trees, from which hang large bunches of **Scolopendria*, and *Liannes*, which falling down, are ſuſpended by their own twigs. The ground about them is rugged, with great pieces of black rock, overgrown with moſs and maiden-hair. Large trunks over thrown by the hand of time, lay, covered with fungus, waved with various colours.

FERN grows here in infinite variety. Some, like leaves ſeparated from the ſtem, meander among the ſtones, and draw their ſubſtance from the rock itſelf. Others ſpring up like a tree of moſs, and reſemble a plume of ſilken feathers. The common ſort is of twice the ſize here, that it is in Europe. In lieu of the groves, and reeds, which ſo beautifully variegate the borders of our rivers, along the ſides of theſe torrents, grow a kind of water-lillies,

* *Spleen-wort*, or *hartſtongue*, a medicinal herb, Pliny ſays, it was called in his time *Scolopendria*, *lingua cervina*, or *Aſplenus*. There is a fiſh, and alſo an inſect, called *Scolopendria*, both of which were called by the Ancients *millipeda*, and the Italians now call them *Centogambo*. T.

in great abundance, with very large leaves, in the form of a heart. They are called *Songes*. It will float upon the water without being wet, and the drops of rain amaſs together upon it, like globules of ſhining ſilver. Its root is an onion, of a malignant quality. 'Tis diſtinguiſhed into the black, and the white.

NEVER were theſe ſavage deſarts enlivened by the ſongs of birds, nor have they ever ſeen reluctant maid with downcaſt eye, and liſt'ning ear attend to the fond lover's tale. The ear is ſometimes grated by the croaking of the perroquets, or pierced by the ſhrill cry of ſome malicious monkey.

YET, notwithſtanding the barrenneſs of the ſoil, even theſe rocks might be habitable, if the Europeans had not brought hither more and greater evils, than Nature herſelf, has heaped upon it.

The PORT, *October* 8, 1768.

LET-

LETTER IX.

Of the ANIMALS natural to the ISLE OF FRANCE.

THE Monkey of *Madagaſcar*, called *Maki*, does not in the leaſt reſemble thoſe of this Iſland; nor the Baboons of the Cape of *Good-Hope*.

THE Monkey of the Iſle of France, is of a middling ſize. It is of a reddiſh grey caſt, and has a long tail. This animal is fond of ſociety. I have ſeen them in troops of ſixty at a time. They frequently come in droves, and pillage the houſes. Scouts are placed on the tops of trees, and the points of the rocks, who as ſoon as they ſee any dogs or hunters approach, cry out, to alarm the others, who immediately decamp. They will climb up the ſteepeſt mountain, and reſt upon the ſlighteſt edge of a precipice, where no other quadruped of its ſize dare venture. Thus Nature, which has covered even the holes of the rocks with herbage, has alſo created Beings to enjoy the benefit of it.

THE *Rat* ſeems a native of this iſland. There are prodigious numbers of them; and it is ſaid, that the place was abandoned by the Dutch, becauſe of this creature. In ſome houſes they are ſo numerous, that

30000 * are killed in a year. They make large hoards under ground, both of corn and of fruits, and climb up to the tops of the trees to eat the young birds. They will pierce the very thickeſt rafters. One may ſee them at ſun-ſet, running about in all parts, and in one night they will deſtroy an entire crop. I have ſeen a field of maize, in which they have not left one ſingle ear. They are exactly like the rats of Europe, and have, very poſſibly, come from thence in ſhips.

MICE are very common here; the havock they make is incredible.

IT is ſaid, that there were formerly a great many *Flamingos*; this is a large and beautiful ſea-fowl, of a roſe-colour; they ſay alſo, that three of them yet remain, but I never ſaw them.

MANY *Corbigeaux* fly about, and are reckoned the beſt game the iſland produces; but are difficult to ſhoot.

THERE are *Paillencus* of two ſorts, the one of white, like ſilver, the other having the beak, claws, and the tail red. Although this is a ſea-bird, it builds its neſt in the woods. Its name is not at all ſuited to its extraordinary beauty. The Engliſh more

* This number may appear improbable, and I ſhould have been inclined to think the Author miſinformed, had I not been told by a Gentleman, upon whoſe veracity I can depend, that upon his return from the Havanna in the year 1766, in the Valiant man of war, the rats increaſed to ſuch a degree, as to deſtroy a hundred weight of biſcuit a day. The ſhip was at length ſmoked between decks, in order to ſuffocate them. This had the deſired effect, and ſix hampers were filled daily for ſome time with the rats killed by this means. *T.*

properly

properly call it the *Tropic Bird.* It keeps near the ſea, and is not intimidated at the ſight of man.

TURTLES uſed frequently to be found on the ſhore, but now rarely. Their fleſh is like beef; the fat green, and well taſted.

I HAVE ſeen many ſorts of *Parrots*, but none very handſome. There is a ſpecies of green *Perroquets*, with a grey head. They are as large as ſparrows. It is impoſſible to tame them. Theſe alſo are enemies to the harveſt, but they are very good to eat.

IN the woods are found black-birds, which when called to by a ſportſman, will come to the end of his gun. This is a kind of game much in requeſt.

THERE is a pigeon called the *Dutch-Pigeon*, of a moſt magnificent plumage; and another ſort, which although, of a very pleaſant taſte, are ſo dangerous, that thoſe who eat them are thrown into convulſions.

Two ſorts of *Bats* are found here; one like ours, the other as big as a ſmall cat, very fat; and is eaten by the inhabitants as a rarity.

THERE is a ſpecious of ſparrow-hawk, called the *Chicken-eater*; it is alſo ſaid to eat *graſshoppers.*

THE ſea-ſide is full of holes, in which lodge a great number of *Toulouroux*, they are a kind of amphibious crab, and make burroughs under ground like moles. They run very faſt; and if you attempt to catch them, they ſnap their claws, and preſent their points, by way of menace.

ANOTHER amphibious and very extraordinary creature, is the *Bernard L'Hermite*, a kind of lobſter, whoſe hinder part is not provided with a ſhell; but it inſtinctivly lodges itſelf in empty ſhells, which it finds upon the ſhore. One may ſee them run along in great numbers, each with its houſe after it, which it abandons for a larger when its growth makes it neceſſary.

THE moſt deſtructive inſects on this iſland, are the *graſshoppers*. I have ſeen them light upon a field, like a fall of ſnow, and lay upon the ground ſeveral inches deep. They will eat up the verdure in the courſe of one night. This is the moſt dreaded enemy of agriculture.

THERE are many ſorts of ſnails, and a large butterfly, which has upon its body the figure of a Death's Head. It is called *Hai* ‡, and flies about chiefly in rooms. It is ſaid that the down of its wings will blind thoſe whoſe eyes it touches.

The houſes are full of ants, which deſtroy proviſions of every kind. The pantries are not ſafe from their ravages, except they ſtand in water. Numbers of them are killed by an inſect called a *Formicaleo*.

THE § *Centpieds*, or *Centipedes*, are frequently found in damp places. This inſect ſeems deſtined to drive mankind from the unwholeſome air they breed in. Its ſting is very painful. My dog was bit by one of them, which was more than ſix inches long; the

‡ *Odious or Hateful*; ſo called, the Author ſays, from the fear it excites. *T.*

§ This, I ſuppoſe to be the inſect *Scolopendria*, beforementioned. *T.*

wound

wound turned to a kind of ulcer, and was three weeks in healing. I was highly pleaſed with ſeeing one of them carried off by a vaſt unmber of ants; they had ſeized it by all its legs, and bore it along as workmen do a large piece of timber.

THE yellow waſp with black rings upon the body, is not leſs formidable for its ſting, than the ſcorpion, which is very common here. It builds in trees, and even in houſes, its hive is of a ſubſtance like paper. There was one of them in my chamber; but I ſoon grew weary of ſo dangerous a gueſt.

The waſp called *Maçonnel*, or the *Maſon*, builds itſelf a neſt of earth, which one would think, was the work of a ſwallow, were any in the iſland. It lodges in rooms that are not frequented, and chiefly in the locks, which are filled with its labours.

ONE frequently finds in the gardens, leaves of the ſize of a ſixpence; this is the work of the waſps, who ſhape with their teeth theſe circular pieces, with a nicety and readineſs truly admirable. They carry them into their neſts, and having rolled them into the ſhape of a horn, depoſit their eggs in them.

THERE is a ſpecies of inſect like an ant, which is not leſs induſtrious with regard to their habitations. They make great havock among the trees and timber, the wood of which they reduce to a powder; with this duſt they conſtruct little caverns of about an inch broad, under which they live; theſe caverns or pipes, are black, and will ſometimes run over the timber of a whole houſe. They will penetrate through trunks, or furniture in one night. I found no remedy ſo effectual as to rub the places they frequented very often

ten with garlick. They call theſe inſects *Carias*. Many houſes are quite ruined by them.

THERE are three ſpecies of *Cancre'as*, the dirtieſt of all the *Scaraboea*. One of them is flat and grey; the moſt common one is of the ſize of a cockchafer, of a reddiſh brown. It attacks furniture, eſpecially books and papers, and harbours conſtantly in the offices and kitchens. The houſes are very much peſtered with them; eſpecially in wet weather.

IT has for an antagoniſt, a ſpecies of *Scarabæa*, or green fly, very gawdy and very nimble. When the *Cancrelas* is met with, and touched by this fly, it becomes motionleſs. The fly then ſeeks for ſome crack or chink, to which it draws the *cancrelas* and thruſts it in, depoſits an egg in its body, and then leaves it. This touch, which ſome look upon as a charm, is the ſtroke of the ſting, the effect of which is inſtantaneous, this inſect being elſe hard to kill.

IN the trunks of trees there is found a large worm with paws, that picks the trees, they call it *Montac*. The blacks, and even the white people eat them greedily. Pliny obſerves, that they were ſerved up at the moſt capital tables in Rome, and were fattened with meal for that purpoſe. That found in the oak-tree was in the higheſt eſtimation; and was called *coſſus*. Thus have abundance and ſcarcity combined in the ſame taſte; and like all other extremes, approached very near to each other.

THERE are lady-birds on the ſides of the rivulets, of a fine violet colour, with a head like a ruby. This inſect is carnivorous. I have ſeen it carrying a beautiful butterfly through the air.

THE

THE apartments are, at certain ſeaſons, filled with moths, or ſmall butterflies, that come and ſinge themſelves in the candle. They are ſo numerous, that the candles are frequently obliged to be put into cylinders of glaſs. They draw into the houſes a very handſome ſmall lizard, about a finger's length. Its eyes are lively; it climbs along the walls, and even along the glaſs, lives upon flies and other inſects, and watches with great patience for an opportunity of catching them. It lays eggs that are ſmall and round like peas, having a white and yellow ſhell, as the eggs of pullets. I have ſeen ſome of theſe lizards ſo tame, that they would come and take ſugar out of a perſon's hand. Far from being miſchievous, they are on the contrary, very uſeful. Some very beautiful ones are to be ſeen in the woods, of an azure, and changeable green, marked with crimſon on the back, like Arabic characters.

AN enemy that is ſtill more terrible to the inſects, is the *Spider*. Some of them have bellies as big as a nut, with large paws, covered with hair. Their webs are ſo ſtrong, that even ſmall birds are catched in them. They are of uſe, in deſtroying the waſps, ſcorpions, and centipedes. There is a little white louſe, that harbours in fruit-trees, and deſtroys them; and a bug, whoſe bite is more dangerous than that of the ſcorpion, and is ſucceeded by a tumour as big as a pigeon's egg, which continues for four or five days.

YOU will obſerve, that the temperature of this climate, ſo tempting to the inhabitants of Europe, is ſo favourable to the propagation of inſects, that in a ſhort time, the fruits would be eaten up by them, and the iſland itſelf become uninhabitable; but

but the fruits of theſe meridional countries, are clothed with a thick rind, and afterwards with a ſkin, a very hard ſhell, or an aromatic bark, like the orange or citron, inſomuch that the flies can introduce their worms into very few of them only. Many of theſe noxious animals are at perpetual war with each other, as the ſcorpion and the centipied. The *Formicaleos* lays ſnares for the Ant; the green fly pierces the *Cancrelas*; the *Lizard* hunts the *Butterfly*; the *Spiders* ſpread nets for every inſect that flies; and the hurricane which rages once a year, annihilates at once a great part, both of the prey, and of the devourers.

PORT-LOUIS, *Dec.* 7, 1768.

LET-

LETTER X.

I am now to write to you concerning the ſea, and its productions, you will then know at leaſt as much as the firſt Portugueze that landed in this iſland. If I can add to this a metereological journal, you will by degrees be acquainted with the whole natural hiſtory of this country; from hence we ſhall go on and treat of the inhabitants, and of the courſe they have taken for the improvement of their country, where, as in every other part of the world, good and evil are mingled together. Plutarch would have us deduce harmony from theſe contrarieties; but though good inſtruments, are very common, good Muſicians, are found but rarely.

WHALES are often ſeen to windward of this iſland, eſpecially about September, the time of their coupling. I have ſeen many this ſeaſon, that kept themſelves upright in the water, and came very near the coaſt. They are ſmaller than the northern ones. There is no whale fiſhery, but the Negroes are not unacquainted with the method of harpooning them. * Sea Cows are ſometimes catched here; I have eaten of them, their fleſh is like beef; I never ſaw any of this fiſh.

THE VIEILLE, is a blackiſh fiſh, and in form and taſte a good deal like the cod fiſh. One extraordinary

* Whales are in ſuch plenty upon the equally ſouthern coaſt of Brazil, that they conſtitute the greateſt part of the food of the Negroes, belonging to the Planters near the ſea; as I have been informed by a perſon who lived ſeveral years in that country. *T.*

Herodotus in Lib. 4 ſays that in the Boryſthenes, in his time there were Whales. *T.*

circumſtance,

circumſtance, is, that the fiſh on the windward-ſide of the iſland is never unwholſome. Thoſe then that attribute this poiſonous quality to the Madrepores are miſtaken; the iſland being on all ſides ſurrounded by banks of coral. I ſhould rather think it occaſioned by ſome venomous tree falling into the water, which conjecture is the more probable; becauſe at one ſeaſon, only, ſome particular ſpecies of gluttonous fiſh are ſubject to this inconveniency. Moreover that ſpecies of Pigeon whoſe fleſh occaſions convulſions in the eaters of it, proves that the poiſon is in the iſland itſelf.

Among the fiſh to be ſuſpected are a number of white ones, with a large belly, and a great head, ſuch as the Captain and the Carangue. Theſe two ſorts are of an indifferent taſte. Thoſe that have their mouths paved, that is to ſay, a rugged bone in their palates are thought to be never dangerous.

In general, the ſmaller the fiſh, the greater the danger.

The Water-pullet, a ſort of Turbot, is the beſt of all the fiſh catched here,—the fat is green.

PERROQUETS, that are not only green, but have yellow heads, white and crooked beaks, and go in a body like the birds of that name.

The HOG-FISH, is ſmall and oddly ſhaped; its head is like a pike, upon its back are ſeven points as long as its body, the prick of them is very venomous; they are united by a membrane like the wing of a bat; it is ſtreaked with brown ſtripes, which begin at the muzzle, exactly as thoſe of the Zebra at the Cape. The fiſh is ſquare like a trunk, and which

which name it bears, is armed with two horns like a bull; there are many ſpecies of them: they never grow large.

The EEL is tough, they are of the conger ſort, ſome of them are ſeven or eight feet long, and as thick as a mans leg. They harbour in the creeks of the rivers, and ſometimes devour thoſe who are imprudent enough to bathe there.

There are LOBSTERS or CRAY-FISH of a prodigious ſize, their paws are not large, they are blue, marbled with black. I have ſeen here a ſpecies of lobſter that is ſmaller and of a beautiful form; it was of a ſky-blue; it had two little claws, divided into two articulations, like a knife with the blade ſhutting into the handle.

There is a great variety of CRABS. The following ſeemed to be moſt worthy of notice.

A ſort that is rugged with tubercules and points like a madrepore; another that has upon its back the impreſſion of five ſeals; another with ſomething in the ſhape of a horſe-ſhoe at the end of its claws; a ſort covered with hair, that has no claws, and that adheres to the ſides of ſhips; a crab marbled with grey, the ſhell of which though ſmooth and poliſhed is very uneven. Many irregular and ſtrange figures are obſervable among theſe, which are notwithſtanding perfectly alike upon each crab; that with its eyes at the end of two long tubes like teleſcopes, which when it is not uſing them, it depoſits in grooves along the ſide of its ſhell.

A Crab with red claws, one much larger than the other; a ſmall crab with a ſhell thrice as big as itſelf, in which it is covered over as by a buckler, ſo that its claws cannot be ſeen when it walks.

In

In many places along ſhore and ſome feet under water are found a multitude of large *Boudins de Mer*, red and black. In taking them out of the water they emit a white and thick ſlime, that immediately changes into a number of ſmall and glutinous threads. I believe this animal to be an enemy of the crab ſpecies, amongſt which it is to be always met with. Its vicious glear is very fit to entangle their claws, which otherwiſe could have no hold upon its elaſtic hide, and cylindrical form. The ſeamen give it a very groſs appellation which I will render in latin *mentula monachi*. The Chineſe hold it in high eſteem, looking upon it as a powerful aphrodiſiac.

I think I may rank among the ſhell-fiſh a ſhapeleſs Maſs, ſoft and membranous, in the middle of which is one ſingle flat bone that is a little arched. In theſe ſpecies the uſual order ſeems to be reverſed, the animal is on the outſide of the ſhell.

It is thought a great ſingularity, that all univalves of which there are many, are turned from left to right, in looking at the ſhell when lying on its mouth, and the point towards ones-ſelf: there are very few exceptions to this rule. What law can have determined them to begin their volute on the ſame ſide? Is it the ſame that has cauſed the ſun to turn from Weſt to Eaſt? In this caſe the ſun may in ſome degree be the cauſe, as it is of their colours, which are the more beautiful the nearer to the line. There is much ingenuity and variety in the hinges of ſhell-fiſh, and our artiſts might improve by attending to the conſtruction of them.

The OYSTER called the *Tulier* is common here, and is of the ſame ſort as thoſe that are uſed as holy water

water pots in the church of St. Sulpice, at Paris; and is perhaps the largeſt ſhell which the ſea produces: ſome of them are found at the Maldivia Iſlands, which are not to be drawn by two oxen without difficulty. It is rather extraordinary that this oyſter is found in Normandy as a foſſil, upon which coaſt I have ſeen it.

Apparently, ſhell-fiſh do not live peacebly together, any more than other animals do. Many of them are found broken to pieces on the ſhore; thoſe that are taken whole are always pierced. I too have ſeen a ſnail armed with a pointed tooth, with which it pierced the ſhells of muſcles: twas brought from the Streights of Magellan.

The ISLE of FRANCE is ſurrounded with Madrepores, a kind of vegetation of ſtone formed like a plant or ſhrub. They are ſo very numerous that the rocks ſeem formed of them only.

Among thoſe that adorn and diverſify the bed of the ſea and adhere to it by their roots, are, the colly-flower; the cabbage, whoſe appearance is very like that plant; it is of the large ſort, as well as another madrepore, the ſtages of which grow ſpirally; it is very brittle; another that by the high ſhooting of its head and the robuſtneſs of its branches, reſembles a tree; a very beautiful ſpecies, which I called the ſheaf; it ſeems formed of ſeveral bunches of ears of corn; the pencil or pink,—at the center of each opening, there is a little piece that is green.

A BEAUTIFUL MADREPORE, growing in the form of an iſland with its ſhores and Mountains; another, like an icicle; another, the leaves of which are digitated like a hand: the ſtag-wood, with horns very detached

detached and brittle: the beehive, a large ſhapeleſs maſs, the whole ſurface of which is full of regular holes; the pale blue coral, which is rare,—within, it is of a deeper blue; the jointed coral, black and white, containing a ſmall piece of red coral which has not yet been ſeen here; vegetations of coral, blue, white, yellow and red, ſo brittle, and ſo much pierced that one cannot ſend any of it to Europe.

AMONG the *Litophites*; a plant like a long ſtraw without leaves, buds or buttons; a vegetation like a foreſt of trees; their roots are very much interwoven, and have each a ſmall noſegay of flowers; the ſubſtance of this *Litophite* is of the nature of wood, and burns like it in the fire; it is notwithſtanding claſſed among the Madrepores.

I HAVE ſeen three ſorts of ſea ſtar-wort, but nothing remarkable in either. Formerly ambergreaſe was found upon the coaſt, (there is even a little iſland to windward called by that name). It is ſometimes brought from Madagaſcar.

IT is not now doubted but that the Madrepores are the work of an infinity of ſmall animals, altho' they have a perfect reſemblance of plants; I was pleaſed to be experimentally convinced of this, it being delightful to me to look upon the Univerſe as peopled. Beſides I conceive ſo regular a work can only be carried on by ſome agent endewed with intelligence and a love of order. Theſe vegetations reſemble ours ſo much, the component matter apart, that I am even much induced to believe our vegetables alſo to be * productions of the labour of a multitude of living animals combined together for that purpoſe. I had much rather look upon a tree as a republick, than as a machine without life. and actuated by I know not

* See letter 29 where this ſubject is diſcuſſed.

what

what laws of Hydraulics. I could ſupport this opinion by many curious obſervations, for which I may perhaps ſome time hence have leiſure. Theſe reſearches may be uſeful, but when not employed to a good purpoſe, do but divert our attention from the more laudable purſuits on which it ſhould be employed, and habituate it to fix upon any thing trifling that preſents itſelf. Our hiſtories are frequently made up of calumnies, our moral treatiſes, of Satires, and our ſocieties and academies of ſlander and epigrams. And after all this, men lament that friendſhip and confidence no longer exiſt; not conſidering the impoſſibility that they ſhould do ſo; among perſons, each of whom carries a ſhield upon his heart, and a poignard under his cloak.

Let us talk little, or let us form ſyſtems, *Tradid mundum diſputationibus.* Let us diſpute then, but without being angry.

PORT LOUIS, *12th of January* 1769.

METEREOLOGICAL JOURNAL.

QUALITIES OF THE AIR.

JULY, 1768.

DURING this month the winds blew from the ſouth-weſt as it uſually does all the year. There is a ſtrong breeze all day, and at night it is calm. Altho' tis now the dry ſeaſon, yet it frequently rains, with violent ſqualls, that laſt but a ſhort time. The air is very ſharp; in ſo much that cloth clothes are indiſpenſably neceſſary.

AUGUST.

IT rained almoſt every day. The tops of the mountains are covered with vapours like ſmoke, which deſcend upon the plains with guſts of wind. Theſe rains frequently form rainbows upon the ſides of the mountains, which however are not the leſs black on that account.

SEPTEMBER.

THE wind and weather as before. Tis the ſeaſon for harveſt. If heat and moiſture are the ſole cauſes of vegetation, why does nothing ſhoot at this time? It is no leſs hot than in May in France. Can there be any ſpirit of life attending the return of the ſun? The Romans paid honours to the weſtern wind, and fixed the period of its arrival at the 8th of February. They called it *Favonius*, or the Foſterer. 'Tis the ſame as the Zephyr of the Greeks. Pliny ſays it ſerves as a huſband to all things that draw their exiſtence from the earth.

OCTOBER.

THE ſame temperature; the air is a little hotter, it is always coldeſt in the interior part of the iſland. At the end of this month they ſow their wheat, and in four months after is their harveſt; they then ſow maize, which is ripe in September. Thus have they two crops on the ſame land; but theſe are ſcarcely a compenſation for the other plagues with which this iſland is peſtered.

NOVEMBER.

THE heats begin to be felt, the winds change, and ſometimes get round to the N. W. Storms of rain fall.

No

No ſhip from France. No letter. It is grievous at this diſtance to be in conſtant expectation of our chief happineſs from Europe.

DECEMBER.

THE heats are exceſſive. The ſun is in the zenith, but the air is tempered by plentiful rains. I think I have felt it hotter in the ſummer at Peterſbourg. At the beginning of the month I heard thunder for the firſt time ſince my arrival.

THE 23d in the morning the wind blew from the S. W. and ſeemed to preſage a ſtorm. The clouds gathered at the top of the mountains. They were of an olive or copper colour, and one long range of them was higher than the reſt and motionleſs. The ſmaller ones that were below blew about with a ſurpriſing rapidity. The ſea broke upon the rocks with a great noiſe. Many of the ſea birds flew for ſhelter to the land. The domeſtic animals were very uneaſy. The air was gloomy and hot although the wind was ſtill high.

ALL theſe ſigns preſaging a hurricane, every body haſtened to ſtrengthen their houſes with ſupporters and props, and to block up their doors and windows.

ABOUT 10 o'clock in the evening the hurricane announced itſelf by horrible guſts of wind, which were followed by not leſs horrible intervals of calm, in which the wind ſeemed to collect new powers. It kept augmenting the whole night; my apartment being very much ſhaken, I went into another. The good woman I lodged with, wept, and was in deſpair at the thoughts of her houſe being deſtroyed. Nobody went to bed. Towards morning the wind redoubled

its efforts. I perceived that one ſide of our palliſade fence was falling. and that part of the roof of the houſe was raiſed at one corner; I got ſome planks and cords, by means of which I prevented the damage that would elſe have happened. In croſſing the yard to give directions about this work, I frequently thought I ſhould have been blown down. Some walls at a diſtance were falling, and ſome roofs were torn to pieces, the timbers of which were blown away as if they had been cards.

ABOUT 8 in the morning ſome rain fell, and the wind not at all abated, blew it horizontally along with ſuch violence, that it entered like ſo many Jets-dëau at every the ſmalleſt opening. It ſpoiled ſeveral of my papers.

AT 11 o'clock the rain fell in torrents. The wind ſubſided a little, the ravines in the mountains formed prodigious caſcades on every ſide. Large pieces of the rocks broke off with a noiſe like that of Cannon, and as they rolled down, cleared to themſelves a path among the woods. The rivulets overflowed into the plain which by this time was like another ſea, neither banks nor bridges being any more to be ſeen.

AT one o'clock the wind whirled about to the N. W. and drove the ſurf of the ſea in large clouds along the land. The ſhips in the harbour were run aſhore, and kept firing guns as ſignals of diſtreſs, but in vain, for no ſuccour could be ſent to them. By theſe repeated guſts, the buildings were acted upon the contrary way, and with nearly equal violence. About noon the wind ſhifted to the E. and then to the W. Thus it went quite the circle of the horizon in the four-and-twenty hours, as uſual,— after which a perfect calm ſucceeded.

Many

Many trees were blown down, and bridges carried away. Not one ſingle leaf remained in our gardens. Even the herb dogs-tooth ſo remarkably hardy, ſeemed in ſome places to be cut to the very edge of the ground.

DURING the tempeſt a good man of this place whoſe name is *Le Roux*, a joiner, ſent his blacks and workmen to help thoſe that might want their aſſiſtance, and this without any gratuity. Good actions ſhould never be paſſed over without notice,—eſpecially in this place.

THERE was an eclipſe at 4 min. paſt 5 on the 23d, but the bad weather prevented its being ſeen.

The hurricane comes regularly every year in December, and ſometimes in March. As the winds make the tour of the horizon, there is not a cavern in the iſland unfilled with the rain, which deſtroys a great number of rats, graſshoppers and ants,—they are not ſeeen again for ſome time.

IT holds the place of a winter, but the ravages made by it are more to be dreaded. That of 1760 will be a long time thought of. A ſhutter was ſeen lifted into the air and then darted like an arrow, upon a roof at ſome diſtance. The lower maſts of a 64 gun ſhip were twiſted round and broken off. No tree in Europe could withſtand the force of theſe whirlwinds. How the trees of the country are protected we have ſeen above.

JANUARY, 1769.

RAINY weather, hot and gloomy; great ſtorms, but little thunder. The gales of wind blowing very hard in this ſeaſon all navigation is at a ſtand from December till April.

THE

THE Meadows recover their verdure, the earth preſents a pleaſanter proſpect, but the ſky a diſmal one.

FEBRUARY.

STORMY weather, and violent guſts of wind. The Happy, a paſſage boat ſent to Madagaſcar, and the Favorite, a ſhip, are both loſt.

THE 25th of this month the clouds gathered together by a N. W. wind, formed themſelves into a long range from the Flag Mountain to the Iſle of *Tonneliers*. It is motionleſs: claps of thunder innumerable proceeded from it. The ſtorm laſted from 6 in the morning till noon, during which time a number of thunderbolts fell; one of them killed a Grenadier, and another, a Negro woman; an ox upon the Iſland of *Tonneliers* had the ſame fate: a gun in an officer's houſe was melted. The people here ſay, that the thunder never falls within the town; for my part I never heard any ſo loud, and could not help thinking it very like a bombardment. I am of opinion that if they had fired one cannon, the exploſion would have diſpelled the motionleſs clouds from whence the thunder iſſued.

MARCH.

THE rains are not ſo frequent, and the winds always from the S. W. The heat is now tolerable.

APRIL.

THE ſeaſon is fine, and the herbage begins to be dry, and ſhould it now be ſet on fire, the landſcape would be totally black for ſeven months to come.

MAY.

TOWARDS the end of this month the winds according to cuſtom turned to N. W. We have now the dry ſeaſon. I was in the plains, called *Williams* plains, and found the air of a temperature perfectly pleaſant and refreſhing.

JUNE.

THE winds blow almoſt conſtantly from the S. E. and the ſhowers of ſmall rain again begin to fall.

No malady ſeems peculiar to this country, but the people have all thoſe we have in Europe, as the apoplexy, ſmall-pox, pleuriſies and obſtructions in the liver, which laſt I ſhould imagine proceeded rather from vexation, than from the bad quality of the water as is the general opinion. I have ſeen a ſtone taken from a Negroe of the place which was bigger than an egg. Violent gouts and paralytic diſorders are common.

THE Blacks and children are very ſubject to worms: the former have in the venereal diſeaſe dreadful chops or clefts in the ſoles of their feet. The air is as good as in Europe, but has no medicinal virtues, and I would by all means diſſuade gouty perſons from coming here, having ſeen ſome people keep their beds for ſix months together.

THE change of the ſeaſons, makes a very ſenſible alteration in the conſtitution of the inhabitants. They are liable to bilious fevers, and the heat occaſions ruptures. but temperance and bathing will keep a man in health. I cannot however but obſerve that in cold countries, the people are more healthy and their

ſpirits more vigorous, and it is worthy of remark, that hiſtory mentions no celebrated man that was born between the tropics, except *Mahomet*.

LETTER XI.

MANNERS OF THE WHITE INHABITANTS.

THE Iſle of France was uninhabited till diſcovered by Maſcarenhas. The firſt French people that eſtabliſhed themſelves here were ſome Huſbandmen from Bourbon. They brought with them ſimplicity of manners, goodfaith and confidence, a love of hoſpitality and even an indifference with reſpect to riches. Monſieur de Bourdonnais who was in ſome meaſure the founder of the colony, brought workmen into it that were good ſort of men, and ſome others whom their parents ſent from home for miſconduct, and whom by his diſcipline he made good and uſeful members to ſociety.

WHEN he had rendered the iſland reſpectable by the labour he exerted for its encouragement, and it was thought a proper place to touch at in the way to India, people of all ranks poured in upon it. Among whom were the perſons ſent out by the India Company. The principal employments on the iſland being veſted in their hands, they lived in a ſtate equal to that of the nobles in Venice, and to their ariſtocratical manners joined ſomething alſo of a ſpirit of financing, which

which is always prejudicial to the ſpirit of agriculture. Every appointment was at their diſpoſal, and their power was alike abſolute in judicial matters, as in matters of trade. Some of them cleared the lands, and erected buildings, which they ſold again at an exorbitant rate to thoſe who came thither to ſettle. An outcry was raiſed againſt the oppreſſors, but ſo great was their power, that no redreſs could be obtained.

SEVERAL ſeafaring people eſtabliſhed here, who for a long time could not underſtand that the dangers and fatigue of the trade to India was to them, in proportion as the honours and profits of it were to thoſe for whom they laboured. This ſettlement ſo near to the Indies raiſed great expectations on their firſt coming. But before their eſtabliſhment was effected, they became diſcontented, and much more ſo afterwards.

THE company ſent out a military force, among whom were ſome officers of high birth. Theſe had no idea of degrading themſelves ſo far as to rank or connect with men who had formerly been Merchants Clerks; except to receive their pay of them: they liked the ſeamen as little as the merchants,—their manners were too blunt and unpoliſhed. Thus their pride ſtanding in the way of their fortune, they continued as poor as when they left France.

SOME of the King's troops touched here, and ſtaid ſome time. A few of the officers tempted by the ſerenity of the climate and a love of eaſe, fixed their abode here. Every thing and every body being ſubject to the company only, the ſubaltern did not meet here with the diſtinction andreſpect paid to him in garriſons, and which were ſo flattering to his vanity,—being without employment he was looked upon as an

alien

alien among the mercantile people, each of whom had his particular intereſt to attend to.

OTHER ſettlers here, were the Miſſionaries of St. Lazarus, who availing themſelves of the ſimplicity of the firſt inhabitants, had exerciſed a dominion over them uncontrouled: but when the body of the people increaſing very faſt, divided and diſperſed itſelf, they were content to attend to their paſtoral functions, and to ſome of the better ſort of families who countenanced their viſits.

NEXT landed ſome merchants who brought money with them, though to no great amount. In an iſland without trade they added to the abuſes of brokerage already practiſed, and introduced beſides monopolies of every kind.

THEY quickly became odious to the other inhabitants, who wanting the means of impoſition, were themſelves impoſed upon, and gave their oppreſſors the epithet of *Banians*, a name there held in as much abhorrence as that of Jew in France. They alſo affected to deſpiſe the diſtinctions of rank, looking upon every man after his having croſſed the line, to be the equal of his neighbour.

AT length the late war in India, inundated upon the Iſle of France, the ſcum of Europe and of Aſia, Bankrupts,—ruined Libertines,—Thieves, and wretches of every kind, who driven from the former by their crimes, and from the latter by the bad ſucceſs of our arms, attempted to reeſtabliſh their fortunes upon the ruins of the public. On the arrival of this ſet of men, the complaints both general and particular of the inhabitants were augmented; every character was traduced with an Aſiatic ingenuity, hitherto unknown to the

the caluminators of our climate; no woman was now looked upon as chaſte, nor any man as honeſt: all confidence and eſteem, were at an end. Thus by vilifying all mankind, they thought to reduce all mankind to their own level.

ALL their hopes being founded upon a change of the adminiſtration, they at laſt effected their deſign. The company in 1765 yielding up to the King, a colony which had coſt them ſo much trouble and expence;—Order and peace were now expected to reſume their ſeat, but it was found that this change had added new leaven to the fermentation: for a number of perſons were ſent by authority from Paris to make their fortunes in an iſland, uncultivated and without any ſettled trade, and where paper is the only currency. Theſe then were malecontents of another ſort.

A party of the inhabitants who were grateful enough to continue their attachment to the company, ſaw with grief, the introduction of the royal juriſdiction. The other party that had reckoned upon the new government, ſeeing that none but oeconomical plans were adopted, felt their diſappointment the more ſeverely, on account of the expectations they had formed.

To theſe new differences were added the diſſentions of bodies of men, who were at continual variance even in France,—the departments of the marine, the pen,—and the ſword;—In ſhort, the mind of every individual, being neither occupied by buſineſs, nor amuſed by public entertainments, retired within itſelf, to brood over its own inquietudes.

Diſcord reigns all over the iſland, and has entirely extirpated that love of ſociety which might be expected

pected to prevail among Frenchmen baniſhed to a deſart, ſurrounded by the ſeas, and at the end of the world. Each man is diſcontented;—each man wants to get a fortune—and to leave the place. To hear, them talk one would think the iſland would be again uninhabited, every man declaring he will go away next year, and ſome of them have held this intention for thirty years paſt, yet remain to make the ſame declaration the year enſuing.

An officer from Europe ſoon loſes here his military ardour. In general he has but little money and is in want of every thing; his houſe is without furniture: proviſions when bought retail are exceſſively dear, and he finds himſelf the ſole conſumer between the inhabitants and the merchant, who ſeem to ſtrive who ſhall impoſe upon him moſt. This forces him to act upon the defenſive,—he buys by wholeſale, and makes the moſt of all opportunities of getting good bargains, every commodity being of double value after the departure of the ſhips. The anxiety of providing for his family being at an end, another enſues, he torments himſelf with the thoughts of being an exile from his native country, and being deſtined to remain he knows not how long in one deſtitute of every comfort and convenience, want of employment and company, aided by the hopes of gain, allure him to engage farther in that commerce, which mere neceſſity at firſt drove him to.

THERE are without doubt ſome exceptions to this general character of the military, and were they not even numerous, I ſhould recite them with pleaſure. M. de Steenhovre, the commanding officer is a pattern of every virtue,

THE regiments furniſh a number of workmen; for

for the heat is not ſo exceſſive as to prevent the white people from working in the open air. That advantage however for the benefit of the colony has not been made in this reſpect, that might have been. Among the recruits ſent from Europe, there are frequently wretches capable of the moſt atrocious villainies. I cannot for my part conceive but that the ſending of culprits whoſe crimes have rendered them unworthy to remain in their native country, muſt be of bad conſequence to any colony in an incipient ſtate. Theſe unhappy creatures frequently become ſo deſperate, as to murder each other with their bayonets upon the moſt trifling occaſion.

ALTHOUGH the ſeamen do but come and go. they yet have a great influence upon the manners of the the inhabitants. Their policy conſiſts in complaining of the places whence they come, as well as of thoſe they arrive at. They would have you believe that their lucky hour has paſſed them without their making a proper advantage of it,—they ſpeak of themſelves conſtantly as ruined men; they tell you how dear they have bought, and to what loſs they have ſold. The truth of this matter is, that they think no bargain a good one, unleſs they get a 150 per cent by it. A caſk of claret coſts 150 livres, and every thing elſe in proportion. One would ſcarcely imagine that European goods were dearer here than in India, and Indian goods dearer than in Europe. This however is the caſe. The ſeamen are much regarded by the inhabitants who indeed could hardly exiſt without them. Their murmurings, and perpetual going to and again give the iſland the appearance, and in a degree the manners of an inn.

From ſo many of ſuch different conditions, reſults as it were a people of different nations who hate each other

other moſt cordially. Probity and honour are in no eſteem. The *cunning* man is here the man of wit. It is however in my opininion a character worthy only of foxes; it is certainly not a property natural to the human ſpecies, and a wretched ſociety muſt that be, where it is looked upon as an eſtimable quality. On the other hand, miſtruſtful or wary people are much diſliked; this may appear a contradiction, but the reaſon is, that there is leſs to be got, from perſons uſed to be on their guard, who may detect and expoſe thoſe who would impoſe upon them. They will flock about a man whom they know to be artful, and will aſſiſt him to the utmoſt in duping the ignorant.

THEIR inſenſibility with reſpect to the feeling which conſtitute the happineſs of a generous mind, is extreme. They have no taſte for arts or literature, but deeply regret their abſence from the Opera and the Women of Paris. Every ſentiment of humanity is here depraved, nay, I may ſay extinct. I was once at the funeral of a conſiderable merchant, but ſaw no ſigns of affliction; his brother-in-law remarked indeed that they had not dug the grave ſo deep as it ſhould have been.

THIS indifference extends to all things about them. The ſtreets and courts are neither paved, nor planted with trees; the houſes are meer cabbins of wood, which may be eaſily removed from one place to another upon rollers. The windows have neither glaſs nor curtains; and the houſes have but little furniture, and that little very ſhabby.

THERE is a ſort of exchange, where people meet at noon and in the evening; here they make their bargains, and rail at, and talk ſcandal of their neighbours. The married people in the town are very

few

few. Thoſe who are not rich, plead their circumſtances as an excuſe for continuing ſingle: others ſay they will not ſettle till their return to France; but the true reaſon is, their ſeldom or ever meeting with a repulſe in their attempts upon the negro girls. Beſides, there are very few good matches for the men, ten thouſand franks * being a fortune but ſeldom heard of.

THE greater part of the married people live upon their plantations. The women ſcarcely ever come to town but to a ball, or to confeſs at Eaſter. They are moſt paſſionately fond of dancing. No ſooner is a ball announced, than they come in crouds, brought in palanquins, which are a ſort of litter, and carried upon the ſhoulders of four negroes, four others following as a relay. As many children as there are in the family, ſo many of theſe vehicles are there, and each attended as above by eight blacks. The huſbands who are prudent and ſaving, are very averſe to theſe excurſions, as hindrances of the buſineſs of the plantations; but the roads are ſo bad, that a wheel carriage here is of no uſe.

THE women are rather pale, but well made, and in general handſome,—they have naturally a great flow of wit and ſpirits, and if better educated would be moſt agreeable companions, but I have known ſome ſo ignorant as to be unable to read.

AT their meetings they are reſerved and ſilent; each woman brings with her ſome ſecret pretenſions, either from the fortune, the employ, or the birth of the huſband: others reckon upon their youth or their beauty; an Europian looks with diſdain upon a Creole, who as often looks upon the European as an adventurer.

* £ 437,10 or thereabouts, according to the rate of Exchange.

NOT-

NOTWITHSTANDING that the tongue of ſcandal is ever ſpeaking to their prejudice, they are in my opinion far more deſerving than the men, by whom they are neglected for the black ſlaves. Such of the women as are really virtuous, are the more to be commended, that it is by no means owing to their education that they are ſo. They have at once to combat with the heat of the climate, the indifference of their huſbands, and the prodigality and ardour of young officers, ſkilled in ſeduction and regardleſs of repulſe: if then Hymen complains and with juſtice of the infidelities of the fair ſex, whom can we thank but ourſelves, who have introduced the manners of France upon the ſhores of Africa.

IN other reſpects they have very many good qualities,—are domeſtic, ſober, (drinking water only, except rarely), and neat in their apprrel to an extreme. The dreſs moſt common here is of muſlin trimmed with roſe coloured taffaty. They are extravagantly fond of their children, who run about the houſe naked, very ſoon after they are born; are never put in ſwaddling clothes, but are frequenely bathed, eat fruit as they think proper, live without care, and without ſtudy, and ſoon grow ſtrong and robuſt. The puberty of both ſexes makes a very early appearance. I have known girls married here at eleven years old.

THIS manner of bringing up children which approaches ſo near to a ſtate of nature leaves them in an almoſt utter ignorance; but the vices of the negro women, which they imbibe with their milk, and their caprices, which they are ſuffered to exerciſe upon the poor ſlaves to a degree of tyranny beyond all bounds, adds to this ignorance all the depravity incient to ſociety. To remedy this evil, the principal people

people ſend their children while very young into France, from whence they return with vices perhaps more amiable, but certainly more dangerous.

THE number of Planters on this iſland, is ſcarcely four hundred. There are about a hundred women of condition, about ten only of whom live in the town. The evening is their viſiting time—and for want of converſation, they game, or ſoon grow tired of each other. At eight o'clock the evening gun fires, and every body goes home.

FAREWELL, my dear friend; I am really grieved to think that in ſpeaking of mankind as they are, the truth carries with it the air of a ſatire.

PORT LOUIS, Iſle of France, 10th of February, 1769.

LETTER XII.

Of the BLACKS.

In the Population of this Iſland, I muſt include the INDIANS and NEGROES.

THE the firſt are the Malabars, or Malayans, a mild and gentle people, who come from Pondicherry, where they let themſelves as ſervants for a term of years. They are almoſt all of handicraft trades, and occupy a ſuburb, called the Camp of the Blacks. This people is of a deeper hue than the iſlanders of Madagaſcar, who are perfect Negroes; but have features as regular as a European, and not the frizled hair. They are ſober, thrifty, and much given to women. They wear on their heads, a turbant, are clothed in long muſlin gowns, and carry large rings of gold in their ears, and ſilver bracelets on their wriſts. Some of them let themſelves to the rich people, and are called *Pions*, a kind of domeſtic like our running footmen, who executes every commiſſion, with the moſt profound gravity; and by way of diſtinction, carries a cane in his hand, and a poignard in his girdle. It were to be wiſhed, that a great number of Malabars were eſtabliſhed here, eſpecially as labourers; but I never ſaw one of them fond of farming work.

THE Blacks who till the ground, are brought from Madagaſcar, where a ſlave may be bought for a barrel

rel of powder, for a few muſquets, linen, or eſpecially for piaſtres; the greateſt price paid is * fifty crowns, and that rarely.

THIS nation have neither ſo flat a noſe, nor ſo black a ſkin as the Negroes of Guinea. Some of them are only to be called brown, and ſome, as the *Balambous*, have long hair, of a brown, or carrotty colour. They are active, ingenious, have a quick ſenſe of honour and of gratitude, far leſs mindful of injuries done to themſelves perſonally, than of thoſe offered to their family,—which laſt, they deem an inſult of the higheſt degree. When in their own country, they make a variety of things with much art and induſtry. Their *zagaye*, or half-pike, is very well forged, although they have nothing but ſtones for both anvil and hammer. Their linens, or *pagnes*, which are weaved by women, are very fine, and beautifully coloured. Their manner of throwing this garment round them, is extremely graceful. Their head-dreſs is very regular, in rows of curls and braids, nicely ranged one above the other; this is alſo the work of women. They are paſſionately fond of dancing and muſic, and play upon an inſtrument called a *Tamtam*, which is a kind of bow, with a gourd bottle fitted to it. The ſound of it is very ſoft, and is a pleaſing accompanyment to their ſongs, of which, love is always the ſubject. The girls dance to the ſongs their lovers compoſe, while the ſpectators beat time, and applaud the performance.

THEY are very hoſpitable. A Black who is travelling, enters, though unknown, into the firſt cottage he comes to; ſits down with the inhabitants of it, and partakes of their repaſt, without being queſ-

* 7 l. 10 s.

tioned, whence he comes? or whither he is going? This cuſtom is general.

THESE arts, and theſe manners, they bring with them to the Iſle of France, where they are landed with a rag round their loins. The men are ranged on one ſide,—and on the other, the women, with their infants, who cling for fear to their mothers. The inhabitant having examined them, as he would a horſe, buys what are for his purpoſe. Brothers—ſiſters—friends—lovers—are torn aſunder, and bidding each other a long farewell, are driven weeping to the plantations they are bought for. Sometimes they turn deſperate *, fancying that the white people intend eating their fleſh, making red wine of their blood, and gunpowder of their bones.

THEY are treated in the following manner: At break of day, a ſignal of three ſmacks of a whip calls them to work, each of them betakes himſelf with his ſpade to the plantations, where they work almoſt naked in the heat of the ſun. Their food is maize, bruiſed, and boiled, or bread made of Manioc †, and their clothing, a ſingle piece of linen. Upon the commiſſion of the moſt trivial offence, they are tied hand and foot to a ladder; the overſeer then comes with a whip like a poſtilion's, and gives them fifty, a hundred, or perhaps two hundred laſhes upon the back. Each ſtroke carries off its portion of ſkin. The poor wretch is then untied, an iron collar with three ſpikes put round his neck, and he is then ſent

* Ludicrouſly extravagant, as this fancy may ſeem, reflection upon the barbarities exerciſed upon them, muſt allow the poſſibility of its ſuggeſting itſelf, eſpecially in minds ſo ignorant as the ſlaves are deſcribed to be. T.

† A root, for which the Engliſh have no name.—'Tis poiſon, if eaten raw, but wholeſome and good, if boiled. T.

back

back to his taſk. Some of them are unable to ſit down for a month after this beating, which puniſhment is inflicted with equal ſeverity on women as on men.

IN the evening, when they return home, they are obliged to pray for the proſperity of their maſters; and before they go to reſt, they wiſh him a good night.

THERE is a law in force in their favour, called the *Code Noire*, which ordains, that they ſhall receive no more than thirty laſhes for any one offence,---that they ſhall not work on Sundays,---that they ſhall eat meat once a week,---and have a new ſhirt every year; but this law is not obſerved. Sometimes when grown too old to labour, they are turned out to get their bread where they can. One day I ſaw a poor creature who was nothing but ſkin and bone, cutting off the fleſh of a dead horſe to eat;—It was one ſkeleton devouring another.

WHEN a European ſeems affected at theſe ſights, the inhabitants tell him, he does not know the Blacks ---That they are ſuch gluttons as to go and ſteal victuals from the neighbouring houſes;---ſo idle, that they take no manner of care of their maſter's buſineſs, nor do what they are ſet about;—that the women are totally inattentive to family affairs, and ſo little concerned about children, that they had rather procure an abortion, than bring them into the world.

THE Negroes are naturally lively, but after having been ſome time in ſlavery, become melancholy. Love ſeems the only paſſion their ſorrows will permit them to be ſenſible of. They do all in their power to get married; and if their own choice is ſuffered to take

place, they generally prefer thoſe who have paſſed the prime of their youth; who, they tell you, *make better ſoup than the very young ones.* They give the wife all they poſſeſs. If their miſtreſs is the ſlave of another planter, they will go three or four leagues in the night to ſee her, through ways one would think impaſſable. When under the influence of this paſſion, they are alike fearleſs of fatigue or of puniſhment. Sometimes they appoint a rendezvous in the middle of the night, and perhaps, under the ſhelter of a rock, they dance to the diſmal ſound, of a bladder filled with peas: but the ſight of a white perſon, or the barking of a dog, immediately breaks up the aſſembly.

THEY have alſo dogs with them, and it is an undoubted truth, that theſe animals know perfectly, even in the dark, not only a white man, but a dog that belongs to a white man,---both of whom, they fear and hate; howling as ſoon as they approach.

THE dogs of the white people ſeem on their parts, to have adopted the ſentiments of their maſters; and at the leaſt encouragement, will fly with the utmoſt fury upon a ſlave, or upon his dog.

IN ſhort, the Blacks are ſometimes unable to endure their hard lot, and give themſelves up to deſpair. Some,—hang or poiſon themſelves; others will get into a little boat, and without ſails, proviſions, or compaſs, hazard a voyage of two hundred leagues, to return to Madagaſcar, where they have been ſometimes ſeen to land; and have been taken, and ſent back to their maſters.

IN general, they ſecrete themſelves in the woods, where they are hunted by parties of ſoldiers, and by other

other negroes with dogs. Some of the inhabitants form parties of pleaſure for this purpoſe---put up a Negro as they would a wild beaſt, and if they cannot hunt him down---will ſhoot him---cut off his head---and bring it in triumph to town upon the end of a ſtick. Of this I am an eye-witneſs every week.

WHEN a *Maron-Negro* is catched, he is whipped, and one of his ears cut off: The ſecond time, he is again whipped, the ſinews of his hams cut acroſs, and he is put in chains: for the third offence he is hanged; but is kept in ignorance of his ſentence, 'till put in execution.

I HAVE ſeen ſome of them hanged and broken alive. They went to execution with joy, and ſuffered without a cry. I once ſaw even a woman, throw herſelf from the top of the ladder. They believe that they ſhall find more happineſs in another world, and that the Father of Mankind is not unjuſt, as men are.

SOMETIMES they are baptized, and are told they thereby become the brethren of the white people, and will go to Heaven. But they are hardly to be made believe that the Europeans can ever be inſtrumental to their going to Paradiſe; ſaying, that on earth, they are the cauſe of all the ſufferings they endure. They ſay, that before Europeans landed in their country, they fought with ſticks headed with iron; that they now, taught by us, kill each other at a great diſtance with fire and balls; that in order to procure ſlaves at a cheap rate, we foment continual diviſions and wars among them; that formerly they followed the impulſe of Nature, without fear of thoſe grievous diſtempers, with which we have poiſoned the conſtitutions of their women: that we ſuffer them to languiſh, without clothes, and without nouriſhment, and beat

beat them inhumanly without reaſon. Of all this, I have ſeen frequent inſtances. A female ſlave came one day, and throwing herſelf proſtrate at my feet, told me;---that her miſtreſs made her riſe ſo very early every morning, and ſit up every night ſo late, that ſhe was almoſt totally without ſleep; and that when overcome with fatigue, ſhe did chance to drop aſleep, her miſtreſs cauſed her lips to be rubbed with ordure, which if ſhe did not lick off, ſhe underwent a whipping. A relief from this intolerable grievance, was what ſhe begged I would intercede for.---I did ſo; and obtained my requeſt. Interceſſions of this kind, are ſometimes complied with, and the puniſhment is redoubled a few days after. I was a witneſs to this conduct, in a Counſellor, whoſe Blacks complained of him to the Governor; and who aſſured me, that on the morrow he would have them flead from head to foot. Not a day paſſes, but both men and women are whipped for having broken earthen ware---for not ſhutting the door after them, or ſome ſuch trifling reaſon; and when almoſt covered with blood, are rubbed with vinegar and ſalt to heal their wounds. On the key, I have ſometimes ſeen them ſo overwhelmed with grief, that they have been unable even to utter a cry,---others biting the cannon to which they are tied.—My pen is weary of writing this recital of horrors; my eyes of ſeeing, and my ears of hearing their doleful moanings. Happy you, who when tired of continuing in town, can retire to a country where fertile plains are ſeen, with riſing hills, villages, harveſts and vintages, the plenty of which chears the hearts of a people who accompany their labours with dancing and ſinging.—Signs theſe, at leaſt, of happineſs. The ſights I ſee, are poor Negro women bent over a ſpade, the companion of their labour,—their children ſlung at their backs---Negroes, who paſs trembling and ſhrinking before.

before me,---ſometimes I hear the ſound of their **Tambour* afar off; but far more frequently, the ſmack of the whips, that eccho in the hills like the report of a piſtol, and cries of, "Mercy! Maſter, Mercy!" which at once ſtrike my ears and pierce my heart.

IF I ſeek a retirement, I find a country, barren, rugged, and rocky; mountains whoſe ſummits, inacceſſible, retard the courſe of the clouds, and breaking them, form torrents that ruſh into abyſſes equally horrible and and tremendous. The winds that roar in the deſerts, the hollow, diſmal ſound of the waves daſhing upon the breakers, the ſea before me, vaſt, and extending to regions unknown to the human race, all combine to depreſs and deject my ſpirits, and to furniſh me with ideas fit only for an exile and an outcaſt.

PORT-LOUIS, *April* 15, 1769.

P. S. WHETHER coffee and ſugar are really neceſſary to the happineſs of Europe, is more than I can ſay, but I affirm---that theſe two vegetables have brought wretchedneſs and miſery upon America and Africa. The former is depopulated, that Europeans may have a land to plant them in; and the latter, is ſtripped of its inhabitants, for hands to cultivate them.

IT is thought more for our intereſt to have plantations for cultivating ourſelves the commodities we want, than to purchaſe them of our neighbours. But

* I ſuppoſe this to be the inſtrument they dance to, as before-mentioned. *T.*

But

But ſince carpenters, bricklayers, maſons, and other workmen from Europe, can work in the open air, and expoſed to the ſun, why ſhould not white men be employed in all ſorts of labour! But what then is to become of the proprietors of theſe lands? I anſwer, they would become the richer by this means. An inhabitant would live at his eaſe, were he to employ twenty farmers,---poſſeſſed of twenty ſlaves, he ſtruggles in vain with an inſurmountable poverty. The number of ſlaves here are computed at 2000. A yearly recruit of an eighteenth part of that number, is found abſolutely neceſſary. Hence we ſee that the colony left to itſelf, would in eighteen years be extirpated.----So true is it, that without liberty and property, population muſt decreaſe,---and that injuſtice and good huſbandry are incompatible.

THE *Code Noir*, is ſaid to be made for relief of the ſlaves. Be it ſo---Yet does the cruelty of the maſters exceed the puniſhment it permits, and their avarice with-hold the food, the reſt, and the rewards it decrees. If the poor wretches complain of this infringement, to whom do they ſeek for redreſs? to judges, who are perhaps the tyrants, under whoſe oppreſſion they languiſh.

BUT ſay they, theſe people are not to be reſtrained, but by ſeverities. Puniſhments muſt be inflicted, iron collars with three points, whips, fetters for their legs*; and chains of iron for their necks muſt be made

* I cannot help attempting to deſcribe in this place, a ſort of IRON MASK, or as it is more properly called a MUZZLE, great numbers of which, I am told, are kept by ſeveral wholeſale iron-mongers in this city, to ſupply the orders of merchants and planters in the Weſt-India iſlands.—I have ſeen one of them at the houſe of a Gentleman, as well known for his univerſal benevolence, as

made uſe of---they muſt be treated like ſavage beaſts, or the white people could not live like men. From this principle, ſo groſsly unjuſt, no conſequences can be deduced, but what are equally unjuſt and inhuman; nor does it ſuffice, that theſe poor Negroes are victims to the avarice and cruelty of the moſt depraved of men, but they muſt alſo be the ſport of their ſophiſtical arguments.

OUR prieſts tell them, that the ſlavery of their preſent life, will enſure to them a ſpiritual liberty in Heaven. But the greater part are bought at an age too late to learn French, and our Miſſionaries do not underſtand the language of the country. Moreover,

as for his particular perſeverance in behalf of the African Negroes, and who uſes it as an IRON argument againſt the toleration of Slave holding.—It is faſtened round the neck of the wretched Culprit, by a collar, from which riſe ſome Bars of iron, forming the Maſk and Head piece;——before the mouth is a round plate of iron, wherein are bored holes, to allow a ſmall portion of breath to the wearer.——There is alſo a place for his noſe.——A flat piece of iron goes into the mouth, and acts upon the tongue and glands, as a ſlavering-bit does upon thoſe of a horſe.——Worn by a man working beneath the ſcorching rays of the ſun in the torrid zone, it ſoon attains a violent degree of heat, which with the conſtant flowing of the ſaliva, in a little time, excoriates the noſe, mouth, and chin, and muſt occaſion a TORMENT, the very idea of which it would give me pain to convey to the Reader.——In England, we put upon a vicious *horſe*, or a miſchievous *dog*, a muzzle of LEATHER,——this,——ſelf-preſervation dictates,——but what cogent motive can urge the ſlave-holder, to put upon his fellow-creature—upon a MAN——A MUZZLE OF IRON.——I will tell the Reader.——'Tis to prevent him, when at work, from ſucking, or eating of the ſugar-canes, herein denying him that indulgence which the ALMIGHTY GOD charged the Iſraelite, by the remembrance of his own ſlavery in Egypt, to ſhew to HIS BEAST, when treading out the corn,—or from putting an end to his wretched exiſtence, by cramming himſelf with the dirt of the ground.——A practice to which the deſpairing wretches are frequently driven by the mercileſs treatment of their worſe than Egyptian Taſkmaſters. *T.*

thoſe

thoſe who have been baptized, are not a jot better treated than the reſt.

THE Planters add, that the Negroes merit the vengeance of Heaven, for the traffic they carry on. Are we then to take upon us to be their executioners? Let us leave the deſtruction of kites to the vultures.

I AM concerned to ſee, that Philoſophers, who enter the liſts with ſo much alacrity to combat other abuſes, ſcarcely ſpeak of this ſlavery of the Negroes, beyond a degree of pleaſantry. Indeed, 'tis a ſubject they ſeem deſirous of avoiding. They ſpeak of the maſſacre of Paris, and of the Mexicans by the Spaniards, as if the crimes of our days, and in which the half of Europe are concerned either as principals or acceſſaries, were not equal to them. Can they believe the iniquity of murdering a number of people of a different perſuaſion than ourſelves, to be greater, than that of bringing miſery and torment of the ſevereſt nature upon a whole nation, to whom we are indebted for thoſe delicacies which our luxury has rendered neceſſary to us? Thoſe beautiful roſe and flame-colours, in which our Ladies are dreſſed, cotton, of ſo general uſe, coffee and chocolate, now the only breakfaſt admitted to polite tables; the rouge with which the pallid beauty gives new bloom to her complexion;---all theſe are prepared by the induſtrious hand of the enſlaved and oppreſſed Negro. Ye women of ſenſibility and ſentiment, who weep at the affecting ſtory of a novel, or the repreſentation of a tragedy, know, that what conſtitutes your chiefeſt delight, is moiſtened with the tears, and died with the blood of men.

LET-

LETTER XIII.

AGRICULTURE. Herbs, Vegetables, and Flowers imported.

THE greater part of the plants, trees and animals, I am about to deſcribe, have been brought here by order of government. Some of the inhabitants have contributed their endeavours for this purpoſe; among others, Meſſrs. de Coſſini, Poivre, Hermans, and le Juge. I wiſhed to have learnt the names of the others, that I might have mentioned them with the reſpect which is their due. The gift, or introducing of a uſeful plant, being, in my opinion, of more conſequence, than the diſcovery of a gold mine, and a monument more durable than a pyramid.

I SPEAK of them in the following order; firſt, the plants, which being once ſown, ever after ſow themſelves, and are, as it were, naturalized in the country; ſecondly, thoſe that are articles of cultivation in the country; thirdly, the produce of the kitchen-garden; fourthly, of the flower-garden. I ſhall purſue the ſame method with the trees and ſhrubs. Of thoſe I know, I ſhall omit none.----Whatever Nature has not diſdained to form, we certainly ought not to think too inſignificant to deſcribe.

AMONG the plants that grow wild, is found in ſome of the plains round the town, a kind of indigo, which I ap-

I apprehend to be foreign to this iſland. It is of no uſe.

THE Purſlain grows in ſandy places; I take this to be natural here, being reckoned among that claſs of Plants, which when rotten, manures the ground, and which Nature ſeems to have made the growth of dry and ſandy ſoils, to facilitate vegetations of other kinds.

WATER-CRESSES, are found in every rivulet. They have been brought here theſe ten years. The Dandelion and wormwood grow ſpontaneouſly in rubbiſh, or ground newly opened; but above all, the mullen expands its large downy leaves, and ſhoots up its girandole of yellow flowers to a ſurprizing height.

THE Bulruſh (not the Chineſe plant ſo called) is a graſs about the height of well-grown rye. It extends itſelf daily, and choaks the plants that grow near it. It is apt to be tough when dry, and ſhould therefore be cut before ripe. It is green for five months only in a year, and it is afterwards ſet on fire, notwithſtanding the burning of it is prohibited. The flames of it burn and parch up the out-ſkirts of the woods.

THE White-graſs, (ſo called from the colour of its flower) was brought here, as being proper for forage, but no animal will eat of it; the ſeed reſembles that of cherville. It multiplies ſo faſt, that it is become one of the plagues of huſbandry.

THE Brette, which ſignifies in the Indian language, a leaf good to eat, is a ſpecies of the morell. There are two ſorts of it; one called the *Brette* of Madagaſcar. Its leaf is rather prickly, but of a pleaſant taſte, and is purgative. The other is commonly

monly ſerved up to table as ſpinnage, and is the only food of which the Blacks may eat at diſcretion, and grows all over the iſland. The water in which it is boiled becomes very bitter. In this liquor, mingled and ſtill more imbittered by their tears, the Negroes ſteep their Caſſave.

AMONG the plants cultivated in the country, is, the Caſſave-Root. It grows in dry ſoils; its juice has loſt the poiſonous quality it formerly had: 'tis a ſhrub, whoſe leaf is like that of hemp, with a root as thick and as long as a man's arm; when raſped, and unpreſſed, they make cakes of it, that are heavy like dough. Three pounds of this are allowed for the food of a Negro for one day. This vegetable grows and ſpreads very faſt.---M. de la Bourdonnois brought it from America. 'Tis a uſeful plant, being eaſily ſheltered from the hurricanes, and enſures a certain ſubſiſtence to the Negroes, for the dogs will not eat it.

THE Maize or Turkiſh corn grows very beautifully here. 'Tis a precious grain; turns to good account, but will not keep more than a year, as the mites get into it: this, I think, a good reaſon why the cultivation of it ſhould be encouraged in Europe, as it cannot be with-held long from market. It ſerves as food for the ſlaves, the fowls, and the cattle. 'Tis worthy remark, that the inhabitants ſpeak highly of the excellence of Maize and the Manioc, but never eat of either. I have ſeen little cakes of them in a deſert, and when they are made with a great deal of ſugar, of wheat-flower, and yolks of eggs, they are very eatable.

WHEAT grows well here, but not to any great heighth. They put the ſeed into the ground by ſingle grains, becauſe of the rocks; they cut it with knives, and threſh it out with ſmall ſticks. It will not keep ſo long as two years. Pliny tells us, that in Barbary and Spain, it was put in full ear into holes in the earth, taking care to introduce a proper quantity of air. Varro ſays, that it would keep by this means for fifty years, and millet, for a whole century. Pompey found at Ambratia ſome beans preſerved in this manner, ſince the time of Pyrrhus, which was near 120 years. But Pliny will not admit of the cultivation of the earth by ſlaves of any kind, whoſe work, he ſays, is never done effectually. Although the meal of the wheat that grows here is not ſo white as that from Europe, yet I prefer the bread of it, to that of european meal, which either grows vapid, or ferments during the voyage.

RICE, the beſt, and perhaps the moſt wholeſome of all aliments, thrives very much. It keeps longer than the wheat, and yields more plentifully. A wet ſoil agrees with it beſt. There are above ſeven different ſpecies of it in Aſia, one of which grows beſt in a dry ſoil; it were to be wiſhed, that this grain were cultivated in Europe, on account of its extraordinary fertility.

THE ſmaller kind of millet yields abundantly. It is ſeldom given but to the blacks and the beaſts. Oats thrive exceedingly, but the cultivation of them, or of any thing elſe, which the blacks or the beaſts only derive benefit from, is very little attended to.

THE Tobacco is not good. None is planted but by the Negroes for their own uſe.

THE

THE *Fatague*, is a graſs, bearing large leaves, of the nature of a ſmall roſe-tree. They import it from Madagaſcar, and make of it the moſt delightful artificial meadows.

EXPERIMENTS have been made, but without ſucceſs, to make Saint-foin, Trefoil, Hemp, Flax, and Hops grow here.

You will obſerve, that our vegetables in general degenerate here, and that thoſe who wiſh to have them good, are ſupplied every year with ſeed from Europe, or the Cape of Good-Hope. The ſmall peas are tough, and taſteleſs; the French beans are hard; there is a ſort larger, and more tender, called Cape-peas; it is worth tranſplanting to France. Another ſort of beans which they barrel, they chop the huſks to pieces, and dreſs them as peas. There is another kind of bean (with a pod a foot long) which they plant and form arbours of. The grain is very large, but of no ſort of uſe.

ARTICHOAKS grow here, their leaves are very large, and the fruit but ſmall. The *Cardoon* * is always tough here; but being alſo very prickly, and growing to a great height, it makes very good hedges.

THE *Giromon*, is a pumpkin, not ſo large as ours, and if poſſible, of a more inſipid taſte. The cucumber is ſmaller, and not ſo plentiful as in Europe. The melons here are good for nothing, altho' much boaſted of on account of their ſcarcity. The *Paſteque*, or Water-melon, is ſomething better than the other.

* A kind of thiſtle,—there is one ſort of this plant that is uſed in ſallad. *T.*

The climate ſuits theſe fruits very well; but the loomineſs of the ſoil, is againſt them. Gourds grow here to an enormous ſize, and are of particular utility; they ſerve the Blacks for plates and diſhes.

THE *Briugella* or *Aubergine*, is of two ſorts; the one bears a ſmall, round and yellow fruit, and has a very prickly ſtem; it comes from Madagaſcar. The other, which is known in Paris, is a violet-coloured fruit, of the ſize and form of a large fig. When this fruit is well ſeaſoned and boiled, it is not bad eating.

THERE are two ſorts of pepper; that known in Europe, and another natural to this place; it is a ſhrub bearing very ſmall fruit, that ſhine like ſo many grains of coral upon the moſt beautiful green foliage imaginable. The Creoles uſe it in all their ragouts. It is ſtronger than any other kind of pepper, and will burn like a cauſtick. They call it mad pepper.

THE *Pine-Apple*, the moſt beautiful of all fruits, for the variegated colouring of its ſcaly rind, for its purple creſt, and for its fragrant ſmell, which is like that of aviolet, never ripens here perfectly. Its juice is very cold, and prejudicial to the ſtomach. Its bark is on the contrary very hot, and taſtes like pepper; perhaps as corrective of the juice. Nature frequently contraſts the qualities of the ſame ſubject;—the bark of the citron is of a hot nature, the juice of a cooling;—the rind of the pomegranate is aſtringent, the ſeeds are laxative. &c.

STRAWBERRIES begin to thrive in the cool parts. They have neither the fragrancy nor the ſweetneſs of ours; they yield but ſparingly, any more than the raſberries, which are much degenerated. There is a

ſpecies

ſpecies of them from China, very beautiful, and in great plenty, which grow to the ſize of cherries, but have neither taſte nor ſmell.

SPINAGE is ſcarce here. Garden creſſes, ſorrel, cherville, parſly, fennel, and cellery, have ſtringy ſtems, and are raiſed with great difficulty. Leeks, lettuce, endif, and colliflowers, are ſmaller, but not ſo tender as ours. Cabbage, the moſt uſeful of all vegetables, and which is found in all parts, thrives very well here. Burnet, purſlain, and ſage, grow in abundance; but eſpecially the *Capucine* which grows upon large eſpaliers, and is very long lived.

ASPARAGUS is not much larger than a packthread, and has degenerated in taſte as well as in bulk, and ſo have carrots, parſnips, turneps, ſaſafras, and radiſhes, which are of a biting taſte. There is, however, a radiſh from China, that grows very well here. The beet-root grows beautifully, but is very ſticky. Potatoes, *ſolanum Americanum*, are not bigger here than nuts. The Indian ones, called *Cambar*, frequently weigh above a pound a-piece; their ſkin is of a beautiful violet-colour, but within they are very white and taſteleſs; they however, ſerve for food for the blacks. They increaſe very faſt, as well as the Jeruſalem artichoak, ſome ſorts of which are preferable to our cheſnuts. Saffron is an herb that tinges the ragouts with yellow, as do the ſtamina of the European kind. The ginger here, is not ſo hot as that of India. What is called here, the Piſtachia-nut, which is not the fruit of the piſtachia-tree, is a ſmall almond, that grows in the ground in a wrinkled ſhell. It is pleaſant eating when roaſted, but is hard of digeſtion. They cultivate it here, in order to extract oil for burning. This plant is a ſort of phenomenon in botany, it being uncommon for vegetables that

yield fruit of an unctuous nature, to bear them below the ſurface of the ground.

CHIVES, leeks, and onions are ſmaller than in France, and even than in the Iſle of Bourbon, which is ſo near.

AMONG the plants of the flower garden, I ſhall ſpeak firſt of our own, and then of thoſe of Aſia and Africa.

THE tuberoſe, larksfoot, the large daiſy of China, pinks of a ſmall ſpecies, flouriſh here as in Europe; large pinks, and lillies bear a number of leaves, but ſeldom flowers. The anemony, ranunculus, Indian-pink, and roſe, do not thrive here, any more than the July-flower, or poppy. I ſaw no other flowers that we know of in Europe among the curious, except the above-mentioned. Many people have attempted, but in vain, to tranſplant hither, thyme, lavender, the field-daiſy, violets, and wild-poppy, the red of which, with the azure of the blue-bell, ſo beautifully decorate our golden harveſts. Oh! happy France! a corner of whoſe fields, is, in my eyes, more deſirable, than the moſt beautiful garden this iſland affords.

AMONG the flowering-plants of Africa, I know but one, the *belleimmortelle* of the Cape, the ſeeds of which are as large and red as ſtrawberries, and grow in a cluſter at the top of a ſtem, the leaves of which are like pieces of grey cloth;—another *immortelle*, with purple flowers, grows all over the iſland: a reed, the ſize of a horſe-hair, which bears a group of leaves, white in the inſide, and violet-coloured without: at a diſtance, that bouquet appears in the air; it comes from the Cape, as does alſo a ſort of tulip, bearing but

but two leaves, which lie upon the ground, and ſeem to adhere to it: a Chineſe plant that ſows itſelf, and bears little flowers like roſes; upon its ſtem there are five or ſix, variegated alike, from a deep blood-red to the brighteſt ſcarlet. None of theſe flowers have any ſmell, and thoſe which are known to have it in Europe, loſe it on their being tranſplanted hither.

ALOES flouriſh here. Their leaves turn to good account,—the ſap of them afford a medicinal gum, and the threads are very fit for a manufacture of cloth. They grow upon the rocks, and in the parts ſcorched by the ſun. The one grows out in leaves, ſtrong, thick, and as large as a man, and is armed with a long ſhaft: from the center grows a ſtem as high as a tree, furniſhed with flowers, from which drops gum-aloes in a perfect ſtate. The others are upright, like tapers, ſeveral ſpans high, and have a number of very ſharp prickles about them: theſe laſt are marbled, and reſemble ſerpents that crawl upon the ground.

NATURE ſeems to have treated the Africans and Aſiatics as barbarians, in having given them theſe at once magnificent, yet monſtrous vegetables, and to have dealt with us as beings capable of ſenſibility and ſociety. Oh! when ſhall I breath the perfumes of the honeyſuckle? again repoſe myſelf upon a carpet of milk-weed, ſaffron, and blue-bells, the food of our lowing herds? and once more hear Aurora welcomed by the ſongs of the Labourer, bleſſed with freedom and content.

PORT-LOUIS, Iſle of France, *May* 29, 1769.

LET-

LETTER XIV.

SHRUBS and TREES brought to the Isle of France.

THE roſe-tree thrives ſo well here, that hedges are made of it; but the flowers are not ſo tufted, nor is the ſmell ſo fine as ours; there is of different ſorts, among which, a ſmall one from China, is in bloom all the year round. The jeſſamines of Spain and France are perfectly naturalized in this ſoil; thoſe of Aſia, I ſhall ſpeak of in their place. There are pomegranate-trees with a double flower, and with fruit upon them, but they are good for little. The myrtle does not grow ſo beautiful here as in Provence. Theſe are all the ſhrubs from Europe.

THOSE from Aſia, Africa, and America, are, the *Caſſis* * with a ſcalloped leaf; it is not at all like ours, is a large ſhrub, overgrown with yellow flowers of a ſtrong ſmell, that look like ſmall tufts: it yields a bean, with the grain of which they dye black. Being prickly, it makes good hedges.

THE *Fou'ſapatte* †, an Indian word, ſignifying the *Shoemaker's flower*; its flower rubbed upon leather,

* Black currant buſh.

† I ſhould rather ſuppoſe it a corruption of the Portugueze name, in which language, *Frol de Zapate*, or *de Zapatero*, ſignifies, the ſhoe-flower, or the ſhoemaker's flower. *T.*

ſtains

ſtains it black. The foliage of this ſhrub is of a beautiful green, and larger than that of the yoke-elm; in the middle of which glitter the flowers like pinks, but of a deep red. They have nurſeries of this ſhrub, of which there are various ſorts.

THE *Pointillade*, originally from America, is a ſpecies of bramble, bearing girandoles of yellow and red flowers, from which ſhoot tufts of a flame-colour. This flower is very beautiful, but ſoon fades; it yields a bean. Its leaves are divided like that of all leguminous ſhrubs.

JALOP bears flowers ſhaped like a funnel, of a crimſon red; they blow only in the night, and have a ſmell like the tuberoſe. I have ſeen two ſorts of them.

THE Vine of Madagaſcar, is a rattan of which they make cradles; it gives a yellow flower. Its downy leaves ſeem as if covered with meal.

THE *Mougris* is a jeſſamine, with a flower like the orange-tree. Some have double, and ſome ſingle flowers, of a very agreeable ſmell.

THE *Franchipanier* is ſtill another jeſſamine, that grows in the form of ſtagwood; from the extremity of theſe hornes ſprout bunches of long leaves, in the center of which are large white flowers, ſhaped like a funnel, and of a charming ſmell.

THE Indian *Lilach*, grows here, and dies ſoon; its leaf is ſcolloped, and of a beautiful green. It is loaded with cluſters of flowers, which have a pleaſant ſmell enough, and turn to ſeed. This ſhrub riſes to the height of a tree, and in a handſome form; its

green is finer, but the flowers not ſo beautiful as thoſe of our lilach, which does not grow here.

THE *Pepper-tree* is a rattan, or *lianne*, which creeps along the ground like ivy; it ſhoots well, but yields no fruit. It is not yet known whether the ſoil will agree with the tea-tree, which has been brought hither from China, as well as the rattan,—this laſt is uſed as commonly in India, as the oſier is in Europe.

THE *Cotton-tree* grows in the drieſt parts of the iſland, like a ſhrub, it bears a pretty yellow flower, to which ſucceeds a pod, containing the flocks. Cotton is not cultivated here, for want of mills to grind it: and till ground it is not an article of commerce.

THE *Sugar-cane* ripens here in perfection; the inhabitants make an indifferent ſort of liquor of it, which they call *flanzourin*. There is but one ſugar-houſe in the whole iſland.

THE *Coffee-tree* is the moſt uſeful plant of any that grows here. It is a ſpecies of jeſſamine, its flower is white, leaves of fine green, ſhaped like laurel-leaves, and are oppoſed to each other. It's fruit is a red olive, like a cherry, which ſeparates into two beans. They plant them at ſeven feet and a half aſunder, and when they grow as high as ſix feet, they crop them. It lives ſeven years only, and when three years old is in its prime. The annual produce of each tree is valued at one pound of berries. A black can attend to one thouſand feet of theſe in a year, excluſive of what elſe he cultivates for his own ſubſiſtence. The iſland does not yet produce coffee enough for it's own conſumption. The inhabitants reckon it to be next to the Mocha coffee in quality.

AMONG

AMONG the trees of Europe, the pine, the fir, and the oak grow to a middling ſtature, and then decay. I have alſo ſeen here cherry, apricot, medlar, apple, pear, olive, and mulberry-trees; but without fruit, though ſome of them had flowers. The fig-tree produces a tolerable fruit. The vine does not ſucceed upon props; but when in arbours, bears grapes, which, like thoſe in the gardens of Alcinous, ripen one part after another:* a good vintage cannot therefore be expected. The peach-tree gives fruit enough, and well taſted, but they are never luſcious. There is a white louſe that deſtroys them.

THESE trees are conſtantly full of ſap; burying them in the ground might perhaps be of uſe to retard their vegetation. It is as neceſſary here to protect them from heat, as from the cold in the North of Germany. Theſe trees loſe their leaves in what is called the cold ſeaſon, that is, when it is ſummer with you; notwithſtanding, the heat and moiſture are equal to what you have in the ſpring: there muſt therefore be ſome latent cauſe of vegetation of which we are ignorant.

FOREIGN trees, brought here for curioſity only, are the laurel, which thrives very well; as does alſo the *Agathis* of various ſorts, the leaves of which are ſcolloped; it bears bunches of flowers, white and ſtreaked, to which ſucceed long leguminous pods. The Chineſe frequently repreſent this ſhrub in their landſcapes.

* In Europe the fruits of the ſame tree are ripe nearly at the ſame time; here 'tis quite the contrary, they grow ripe in a regular ſucceſſion; which cauſes a remarkable difference in the taſte of fruits gathered from one and the ſame tree,

THE

THE *Polchè* comes from India; it's foliage is tufted, the leaf is in the ſhape of an heart. It affords a pleaſant ſhade, and anſwers no other purpoſe, it's fruit being ſticky and good for nothing.—It is in the form of a medlar.

THE *Bambou* at a diſtance, looks like our willow. 'Tis a reed which grows as high as the talleſt trees, and ſhoots out branches, furniſhed with leaves like thoſe of the olive: They make the moſt delightful avenues, in which the wind murmurs inceſſantly. It grows faſt, and its canes may be applied to the ſame uſes as the branches of oſier. There are many India pictures in which this reed is badly enough repreſented.

THE fruit-trees are the *Attier*, whoſe triangular flower, of a ſolid ſubſtance, taſtes like the piſtachia; its fruit is like a pine-apple: when it is ripe it is full of a white and ſweetiſh cream, which ſmells like the orange-flower. It is full of black kernels: the *Atte* * is very pleaſant, but being very heating, ſoon cloys, and gives a pain in the ſtomach to thoſe who eat it.

THE *Mango* is a very beautiful tree: The Indians often repreſent it upon their painted ſilks. It is covered with ſuperb girandoles of flowers like the Indian cheſnut. To theſe ſucceed a great number of fruits, ſhaped like a large flat plumb, covered with a rind which ſmells like turpentine, This fruit has a vinous and agreeable taſte; and, but for its ſmell. might vie with the beſt fruits of Europe. It is never prejudicial to thoſe who eat it, and I ſhould think, a wholeſome and pleaſant drink might

* The *Atte*, or *Ata*, is the name given by French naturaliſts to the fruit of the cinnamon-tree. *T.*

be

be made from it. This tree has one inconvenience attending it---being covered with fruit at the time of the hurricanes, which ſtrip it of the greater part.

THE *Banana-tree* grows every where. It has no wood, or ſtock; being only a tuft of flowers, which ſpring up in columns, and blow at the top in large and long leaves, of a beautiful ſattiny green. At the end of a year, there iſſues from the ſummit a long ſtem, all hung with fruit in the form of a cucumber; two of theſe ſtems are a load for a black; this fruit, which is mealy, is alſo pleaſant and very nutritive. The blacks are very fond of it; and it is given to them on the firſt of January, as a new year's gift; they count their years of ſorrow by the number of Banana feaſts they have regaled at. Linen cloth might be made of the thread of the banana-tree. The ſhape of the leaves like belts of ſilk, the length of its item, the upper part of which hangs down from the height of a man, and whoſe violet-colour at the end, gives it the look of a ſerpent's head, may have occaſioned its being called by the name of Adam's fig-tree. This fruit laſts all the year; there are many ſorts of it; from the ſize of a plumb, to the length of a man's arm.

THE *Gouyava-tree* is ſomething like a medlar. Its flower is white, and its fruit ſmells like a bug. It is aſtringent, and is the only fruit of this country, in which I have found worms.

THE *Jam-roſe* is a tree which affords a very fine ſhade, though it does not grow high. It bears a fruit of a ſmell like a roſe-bud, and of a ſweetiſh, but inſipid taſte.

THE

THE *Papa*, is a kind of fig-tree without branches. It grows faſt, and riſes like a pillar, with a capital of large leaves. From its trunk ſhoots out a fruit like a ſmall melon, of an indifferent taſte: the ſeeds taſte like creſſes. The body of this tree is of a ſubſtance like a turnep. The female *Papa* bears flowers, only; in form and ſmell as agreeable as the honeyſuckle.

THE *Badamier* is of a form that ſeems calculated purpoſely for a ſhade. It riſes like a very fine pyramid, in different ſtories, diſtinct and ſeparate from each other. Its foliage is very fine, and it yields almonds which are well taſted.

THE *Avocat* is a handſome tree enough. It bears a pear (which encloſes a large ſtone,) of a ſubſtance like butter. When it is ſeaſoned with ſugar and citron juice, it is not bad to eat; though it is heating.

THE *Jaca* is a tree of a beautiful foliage, but the fruit it bears is a monſtrous one. 'Tis as big as a large pumpkin, and has a rind that is green and ſhagreened all over. It is full of ſeeds; the outſide, which is a white ſkin, ſweet and clammy, is good to eat, but has an ugly ſmell, like that of rotten cheeſe. This fruit is aphrodiſiac, and the women here are paſſionately fond of it.

THE *Tamarind-tree* has a beautiful head; its leaves are oppoſed to each other on one ſide, and cloſe at night, like moſt other leguminous plants. It's pod contains a mucilage which makes excellent lemonade.

ORANGE-TREES are of many ſorts, among them is one yielding an orange called a *mandarine*. A large

large kind of *Pamplemouſſe*, of a red colour, and but middling taſte. A citron * that bears very large fruit, but with little juice in it.

THE *Cocoa-tree* is planted here, 'tis a kind of palm, which thrives in the ſand: this is one of the moſt uſeful trees in the Indian trade, though it affords nothing elſe than a bad ſort of oil, and cables as bad in their kind. It is reckoned at Pondicherry that each cocoa-tree is worth a piſtole a year. Travellers ſpeak much in praiſe of its fruit; but our flax will ever be preferred to cotton, for making cloth, our wines to its liquor, and our filberds to its nut.

THE *Cocoa-tree* flouriſhes ſo much the beſt near ſalt-works, that ſalt is always put in the hole, wherein the fruit is ſown, to facilitate the blowing of the bud ‡. The cocoa ſeems deſigned to float in the ſea, by the wad which ſurrounds it, and helps to bear it up, and by the hardneſs of its ſhell, impenetrable to the water. It does not open by a joint, as our nuts do, but the juice comes out at one of the three orifices which nature has contrived at its extremity, and has afterwards covered with a cuticle. Cocoa-trees have been found upon the borders of the ſea in deſart iſlands, and even upon ſhoals of ſand. This, is the kind of palm which fringes the banks of

* Called by the Engliſh in the Eaſt-Indies, *Pomplemoſe*, and in the Weſt-Indies, *Shaddock*. *T.*

‡ In thoſe parts of the Eaſt-Indies, where fiſh are in plenty, a quantity of the refuſe of them is laid about the bottom of every cocoa-tree. But this practice is very prejudicial to the health of the inhabitants;—the iſland of Bombay was the moſt unwholſome of all our ſettlements, till a ſtop was put to the corruption of the air by this animal putrefaction, and the natives now have recourſe to ſome leſs peſtiferous manure for their cocoa-trees. *T.*

the

the rivers between the tropics, as the fir does thoſe of the north, and the date, thoſe of the burning mountains of Paleſtine.

I THINK I am not deceived, in ſaying that the cocoa is calculated to float upon the ſea, and to ſow itſelf afterwards in the ſands. Every ſeed has its own peculiar method of propagating itſelf; but an inveſtigation of this matter, would make me digreſs too much from the ſubject. I may, perhaps ſome day or other undertake it, and when ever I do, it will be with delight. The ſtudy of Nature compenſates for our diſappointments in the ſtudy of mankind, as we cannot but trace throughout the whole, the harmony with which Intelligence and Beneficence unite to render the ſyſtem compleat. But if it were poſſible, that we ſhould be deceived even in this;—if all things by which mankind is ſurrounded, were combined to diſtract him; at leaſt, let our errors, be errors of our own chooſing, and let us give the preference to thoſe which afford conſolation, rather than excite diſguſt.

THOSE who imagine that Nature in raiſing ſo high the heavy fruit of the cocoa-tree, has loſt ſight of that law which decrees the pumpkin to creep upon the ground, do not conſider that the head of the cocoa-tree is but ſmall, and can therefore afford but little ſhade. 'Tis under the leaves of the oak, men ſeek a ſhelter from the ſun's ſcorching rays. Why not rather obſerve, that in India, as in Europe, thoſe trees which bear a mellow fruit are but of a middling height, that in falling it may not be deſtroyed; on the contrary, thoſe producing fruit of a hard nature, as the cocoa, cheſnut, acorn, and nut, are lofty, their fruit being not liable to be damaged by falling to the ground? Moreover, the trees that are furniſhed with a number of leaves yield as well in India

India as in Europe, a deſirable ſhelter without danger. There are ſome, as for inſtance, the *Jaca*, which bear fruits of a very great ſize; but then they bear them near to the trunk, and within reach of the hand: thus, Nature, which man is ever accuſing of imprudence, has contrived with equal bounty for his ſhelter, and his nouriſhment.

A KIND of crab has been lately diſcovered to burrow at the foot of the cocoa-tree. Nature has provided this animal with a long claw, at the end of which is a nail, ſerving to extract the ſubſtance of the fruit by the holes I have deſcribed. It has not the large pincers of other crabs;—they would be uſeleſs to it. This animal is found upon the Iſle of Palms, to the northward of Madagaſcar, diſcovered in 1769, by the ſhipwreck of the *Heureux*, which was loſt there in going to *Bengal*.

AT the iſle of *Sechelle*, there is juſt diſcovered a tree bearing double cocoa-nuts, ſome of which weigh upwards of forty pounds. The Indians attribute great virtues to it. They believe it to be a production of the ſea, becauſe the currents formerly threw ſome of them upon the coaſt of Malabar. They call it the *ſea-cocoa*. This fruit, *mulieris corporis bifurcationem cum natura & pilis repræſentat*. Its leaf, ſhaped like a fan, will cover half a houſe. Order is obſervable in every work of nature,—the tree which bears this enormous fruit, bears three or four only at the moſt: the common cocoa-tree bears bunches of more that thirty; I have taſted both, and think their flavour very much alike. They have planted the ſea-cocoa in the iſle of France, and it begins to bud.

THERE are ſtill ſome other trees, which though curious, are of little or no uſe, as the *Date*, which ſeldom

dom bears fruit; the Palm, which is called here the *Araque*; and that which produces *ſago*. The *Caneficier*, and the *Cuſhoe*, bear flowers, but no fruit. The *Canellier*, (of which I have ſeen avenues) like a pear-tree in growth and leaves. Its little bunches of flowers ſmell like excrement. Its cinnamon has very little of the aromatic. There is only one *cacao-tree** in the iſland; and the fruits of this never ripen. They ſhould bring thither the *muſcadine* and the *clove*†. Time will decide as to the ſucceſs of theſe trees, tranſplanted from under the Line to 20 deg. of latitude.

SOME time ago, were planted here, layers of the *Ravineſara*, a ſpecies of the *muſcadine* of Madagaſcar; of the *Mangouſtan* and the *Litchi*, which are ſaid to produce the fineſt fruit in the world; the *Vernis*, whence is extracted an oil to preſerve furniture; the tallow-wood, its ſeeds are impregnated with a kind of wax; a tree from China, which bears citrons in bunches, like raiſins; the ſilver tree of the Cape; and laſtly, the *Tecque*-wood, nearly equal to the oak for buiding of ſhips. The greater part of theſe trees vegetate here with difficulty.

THE climate of this iſland ſeems too cold for the trees of Aſia, and too hot for thoſe of Europe. Pliny obſerves, that the temperament of the air is more neceſſary for the culture of plants, than the qualities of the ſoil; and ſays, that in his time, pepper and citron-trees were ſeen in Italy, and incenſe-trees in Lydia; but that they merely vegitated. I am however of opinion, that the coffee-tree might be naturaliſed in the ſouth of France, for it delights in a

* The tree of whoſe fruit chocolate is made. T.
† They were brought in 1770.

cool

cool and temperate air. Theſe expenſive experiments can ſcarcely be carried on by any but Princes; and yet, the acquiſition of one plant unknown before, is a circumſtance, by which a whole nation may be benefited. To what purpoſe have been all the wars upon our Continent? Of what conſequence is it now-a-days, that Mithridates was once conquered by the Romans, and Montezuma by the Spaniards? Unleſs ſome benefit accrue. Europe might with reaſon, weep over her unprofitable trophies; but whole provinces in Germany ſubſiſt upon potatoes brought from America, and our fair ladies are indebted for the cherries they eat, to Lucullus. The deſert was indeed coſtly; but for this, our fore-fathers paid. Let us be wiſer,—let us collect together the good things which nature has ſcattered abroad.

IF labour ſhould ever become neceſſary for my health, I will make a garden after the Chineſe faſhion;—the ſituation they delight in, is on the banks of a river;—they chuſe an irregular piece of ground, on which are old trees, large rocks, and riſing hills. They form round it a boundary of rugged rocks, placed upon one another, ſo that their junctures cannot be perceived. Hereon grow clumps of *ſolopendria*, tendrils with blue and purple flowers, and borders of moſs of different colours. A ſtream of water meanders among theſe vegetables, whence it eſcapes in caſcades. Health and enjoyment are diffuſed over ſuch a ſpot as this, while the European's garden preſents him with no other view but that of a dreary brick-wall.

OF the hollow grounds they make pieces of water, which they ſtock with fiſh, ſurround with

banks of turf, and plant with trees. They are particularly careful that no level ſpot or ſtrait line ſhall appear; nor any maſonry; How often does the fancied ſkill of the artiſt, mar the ſimplicity of Nature's handy work?

THE plain is diverſified with tufts of flowers, and walks of green ſod, in which fruit-trees are planted. The ſides of the hills are variegated with clumps of ſhrubs, ſome bearing fruit, others flowers; the ſummit is crowned with trees whoſe ſpreading branches afford a pleaſing retreat from the parching rays of the ſun.

THERE are no ſtrait walks, diſcovering to you every object at once; but winding paths, which open them to your view in an agreeable ſucceſſion. Nor are their objects, ſtatues, or vaſes, uſeleſs, as they are large;—but a vine bending under a load of ripening grapes, and adorned with roſe-buſhes, and other flowers:—the mind is at the ſame time delighted with a ſonnet or epigram upon the bark of an orange-tree,—or a philoſophical maxim upon a piece of broken rock.

THIS garden is not an orchard,—a park,—a lawn,—but an agreeable aſſemblage of them all;—'tis itſelf a country, with hills, woods, and plains, where each object contributes to the perfection of the whole. A Chineſe has no more idea of a regular garden, than he has of cutting a flowering ſhrub into the ſquared form of a cheſt of tea.

TRAVELLERS ſay, that there is no leaving theſe delightful retreats, but with a kind of regret; for my part, I would enhance the pleaſures of them, by

by the ſociety of an amiable woman, and by having in my neighbourhood ſuch a friend as yourſelf.

PORT-LOUIS, *July* 10, 1769.

LETTER XXV.

ANIMALS brought to the Iſle of France.

SUCH pains have been taken for the improvement of this colony, that even foreign fiſhes have been imported to it; the *Gourami* comes from Batavia, 'tis a freſh-water fiſh, like a ſalmon, but of a finer flavor, being reckoned the beſt fiſh that is eaten in India. The Chineſe *Goldfiſh* is brought here, but loſes its beauty as it increaſes in bulk. Theſe two ſpecies breed very faſt in the ponds and lakes.

IT has been attempted, but without ſucceſs, to bring frogs here, that they might eat the eggs which the muſquito lays upon the ſurface of the ſtanding waters.

BUT a bird has been brought from the Cape, that is of infinite ſervice, they call it the *Gardener's Friend*. It is brown, the ſize of a large ſparrow, and lives upon worms, ſnails, and ſmall ſerpents, which it not only eats when preſſed by hunger, but makes an

ample ſtore of, by ſticking them upon the prickles of the hedges. I have ſeen but one of them, which, though deprived of its liberty, retained the manners of its kind, and ſuſpended the meat which was given it, upon the wires of its cage.

A BIRD that has multiplied very faſt in the iſland is the *martin*, a ſpecies of the Indian *ſanſonnet* *, with a yellow beak and claws. It differs but little from ours, except in plumage, which is leſs ſpotted. In chirping, however, as well as in an aptitude to talk, and to mimic other birds, it perfectly reſembles the European. It will perch upon, and peck at beaſts without fear, but the prey it purſues with an unwearied perſeverance, is the graſshopper, numbers of which ſpecies are deſtroyed by it. The martins always fly in pairs, and aſſemble conſtantly at ſun-ſet in flocks of ſome thouſands. After a general chirping, the whole republic fall aſleep, and at day break, again diſperſe by pairs to the different quarters of the iſland. This bird is not fit to eat; yet they are ſometimes ſhot, though ſhooting them is prohibited. Plutarch relates, that the lark was adored at Lemnos, becauſe it eat and deſtroyed the graſshoppers-eggs: but we are not Grecians.

SEVERAL pairs of ravens were let looſe in the woods to deſtroy the rats and mice. Three cocks are all that are left of them. The people accuſed them of killing their fowls, and herein were at once accuſers, judges and executioners.

THE ravages of the Cape bird cannot be denied, 'tis a ſpecies of ſmall *tarin*†, and is the only inhabitant

* Called by ſome the *Starling*, by others the *Fiſkin*. *T.*

† A kind of lark,—'tis a bird well known in France, and admired for its ſong—and aptitude to talk. *T.*

of

of theſe foreſts that is heard to ſing. They were brought here firſt as curioſities, but ſome of them eſcaped to the woods, where they breed very faſt, and live upon the ſpoils of the harveſt. Government gives a reward to any body that kills one.

THERE is a beautiful *titmouſe* here, with a number of white ſpecks on the wings; and the *cardinal*, whoſe head, neck, and belly, at a particular ſeaſon, are of a lively red; the reſt of its plumage is of a pearl-coloured grey.—This bird comes from Bengal.

THERE are three ſorts of partridges, all ſmaller than ours. The cry of the male reſembles that of a cock when hoarſe; they rooſt at night upon the trees, for fear of the rats.

THEY have put in the woods ſome *pintadoes* *, and Chineſe pheaſants, and into the lakes ſome geeſe and wild ducks: They have alſo tame ducks here, eſpecially the Manilla ones, which are very beautiful; and European barn-door fowls; a ſpecies of fowl from Africa, whoſe fleſh and bone are black; a ſmall ſpecies of fowl from China, the cocks of which are very fierce and bold, and for ever a fighting with the Indian cocks. I ſaw one of them attack a large Manilla duck, which ſeized the little champion with its beak, and ſmothered it with its belly and claws: and although the cock is ſometimes drawn half dead from this perilous ſituation, it will return to the charge with redoubled fury.

MANY people make a great deal of money of their poultry, on account of the ſcarcity of other proviſi-

* So called by the Spaniards, from the beauty of its plumage, which ſeems as if painted. It is believed by ſome to be the *Storm Bird*, or *Procellaria Capenſis*. *T.*

ons. Pigeons ſucceed well, and are the beſt birds of flight in the iſland. They have alſo brought two ſpecies of turtles, and of hares.

THERE are in the woods wild goats, wild hogs, and eſpecially ſtags, which had multiplied to ſuch a degree, that whole ſquadrons were ſupplied with veniſon for proviſions. Their fleſh is very good, eſpecially during the months of April, May, June, July and Auguſt. Some of them have been taken when young, and brought up tame; but they will not breed in that ſtate.

AMONG thoſe that we may call the domeſtic quadrupeds, are ſheep that fatten and loſe their wool, goats that thrive prodigiouſly, and oxen of the Madagaſcar breed, that have a great wen upon their neck; the cows of this breed give but very little milk; thoſe from Europe give much more, but their calves degenerate. I ſaw once, two cows and two bulls from Bengal, which were no bigger than an aſs. This breed did not ſucceed.

BUTCHERS meat is ſometimes not to be got. Pork is the ſubſtitute on theſe occaſions, and is better than our's in Europe; notwithſtanding which, it will not ſalt to keep, on account of the ſalt's being too ſharp or acid. The female of this animal, is ſubject in this iſland to bring forth monſters. I was once ſhewn a little pig, preſerved in ſpirits, the ſnout of which was produced in the manner of an elephant's trunk.

HORSES are very dear, and by no means fine ones. A common horſe cannot be bought for leſs than a hundred piſtoles. They fall to decay very ſoon

ſoon at the Port, from the exceſſive heat. They never are ſhod, though the iſland is ſo rocky. Mules are rarely ſeen. The aſſes are ſmall, and but few in number. The aſs would be a truly uſeful animal in this country, as it would lighten the ſevere labours of the poor negroes. Every load, how heavy ſoever, is carried on the heads of the ſlaves.

A SHORT time ſince, two beautiful wild aſſes were brought from the Cape, a male and female,—they were of the ſize of a mule, and ſtriped on the ſhoulders like the zebra, from which, however, they differed in other reſpects. Theſe animals, though young, were not to be tamed.

THE breed of cats degenerates greatly on this iſland, they grow lean and thin flanked. The rats ſcarcely fear them,—the dogs are therefore the rat-catchers, and my *Favorite* has often diſtinguiſhed himſelf in this ſervice. I have ſeen him ſtrangle the largeſt rat of the ſouthern hemiſphere. The dogs at the long run, loſe their hair and their ſenſe of ſmelling; but it is ſaid that they never go mad here.

PORT-LOUIS, *July* 15, 1769.

LETTER XVI.

TOUR THROUGH THE ISLAND.

MONSIEUR de Chazal, Councillor, and M le Marquis d'Albergaty, both of them fond of Natural Hiſtory, propoſed to me ſome time ſince, to go and ſee a famous cavern about a league and a half from hence. We embarked upon the Great River, which, like the other rivers of this iſland, is not navigable for ſloops, above a muſquet ſhot from its mouth. A ſmall ſettlement is eſtabliſhed there conſiſting of an hoſpital and a few ſtorehouſes; and here alſo begins the aquæduct that ſupplies the town with water. Upon a little height, in the form of a ſugar-loaf, there is a kind of fort to defend the bay.

AFTER croſſing the Great-River, we took a guide, and walked through the woods weſtward, for near three quarters of an hour. It was not long before we came to the entrance of the cavern, which ſeemed like the hole of a cave, the vault of which had fallen in. Many roots of the *mapou* grow perpendicularly down it, and barr up a part of the entrance. The head of an ox was nailed in the center.

WE breakfaſted before we deſcended this abyſs. After which, we lit flambeaux and candles, and furniſhed ourſelves with tinder-boxes to ſtrike fire, if neceſſary.

WE

WE went about a dozen paces down the rocks at the mouth of it, and then found ourſelves in a vaſt, and far more ſpacious cave than I had ever ſeen before.

ITS vault is formed of a black rock.

ITS width was about thirty-feet, and its heighth, twenty.

THE ſoil is very compact and adheſive, and is covered with a fine earth.

ALONG each ſide of the cavern, about breaſt-high, extends a large fillet with mouldings, which I ſuppoſe to be the work of the waters, which flow down in the rainy ſeaſon, of different heights;—the land, as well as river ſhells that we ſaw here, confirm this conjecture. Yet the country people fancy it to be the ancient crater of the volcano. It rather appeared to me as having been the bed of ſome ſubterranean river.

THE vaulted roof is covered with a ſort of dry ſhining varniſh, or ſtony concretion, which extends itſelf to the ſides, and in ſome places, even to the floor of the cave, and forms thereon ferruginous ſtalactites, which broke and crackled under our feet, as if we had been walking upon frozen ſnow.

WE walked on for ſome time, and found the ſoil perfectly dry, except at about three hundred paces from the entrance, where a part of the roof is mouldered away. The water had oozed through in this place, and had ſettled in different parts of the ground beneath.

FROM

FROM thence the roof gradually lowered, 'till we were at length obliged to go upon our hands and knees; being almoſt ſtifled with heat, I would go no further. My companions being more curious, more active, and in a proper deſhabille, continued their route.

As I returned, I diſcovered a plant about the ſize of my finger, which hung to the roof by very ſmall filaments. It was more than ten feet long, had neither branches nor leaves, nor did it appear to have ever had either. It was unbroken at both ends, and was filled with a kind of milky juice.

I returned to the entrance of the grotto, and ſat down to breathe the freſh air, and in a little time heard an inarticulate noiſe, and then, by the light of the flambeaux the Negroes carried, ſaw my fellow-travellers returning in their caps, ſhirts, and drawers, ſo dirty and ſo red, that they looked like ſo many actors in an Engliſh tragedy. They were bathed in ſweat, and all beſmeared with this red earth, over which they had crawled upon their bellies, without being able to go much farther than I had done.

THIS cavern chokes and fills up daily. Methinks, magnificent ſtore-houſes might be conſtructed, by making partition-walls to keep out the water.

WE returned home that evening.—This excurſion made me deſirous of another. I had been invited on my firſt arrival by Monſieur de Meſſin, who lives about ſeven leagues from Port-Louis, upon the Black-River, to ſpend ſome days at his houſe. As his pirogue came every week to Port-Louis, I took the opportunity of going in her on her return.—The

perogue

pirogue is a kind of boat cut out of a ſingle piece of wood, and goes either with oars or ſails.

WE embarked at midnight, and in about half an hour rowed out of the harbour. The ſea ran high, and daſhed with great violence upon the breakers, over which we were ſeveral times driven by the ſurf, without knowing it. The night being very dark, the maſter told me he would land, as he thought it dangerous to proceed till day-light.

WE had gone, I ſuppoſe, about a league and a half; the blacks carried me to ſhore on their ſhoulders; after which they took two pieces of wood, one of *veloutier*, the other of *bambou*, and kindled a light by rubbing them together. This practice is very ancient; Pliny tells us, it was in uſe among the Romans, and that nothing is ſo fit for the purpoſe of ſtriking fire, as a piece of ivy-wood rubbed againſt the laurel.

OUR people ſeated themſelves round the fire, ſmoaking their pipes, which are a kind of crucible at the end of a long reed, and which they hand round as they ſit. I gave them ſome Eau-de-Vie, then wrapping myſelf in my cloak, went to ſleep on the ſand.

AT five o'clock they called me to go on board again. The day breaking, I ſaw the tops of the mountains covered with thick clouds, which blew along at a great rate; the weather was hazy, and the wind drove the fog along the vallies; the main ſea grew white with foam, and the pirogue, carrying both her ſails, made a great way.

WHEN

WHEN we were at that part of the coaſt called *flicq-en-flacq*, about a league and a half from land, we found a prodigious ſhort and broken ſea, with ſqualls of wind, ſo violent as to oblige us to down both our ſails. The maſter ſaid to me in his Patois jargon, "*C'a n'eſt pas bon, Monſié.*" I aſked him, if there was any danger, he anſwered me twice, "*Si nous n'a pas gagné matheur, ça bon.*"—In ſhort he told me, that a fortnight before, the pirogue had overſet, and drowned one of his comrades.

IT was a lee-ſhore, and ſo covered with rocks, that there was no poſſibility of landing; and had we paſſed the iſland, we could not have made it again without the utmoſt difficulty. As we could not carry ſail, the men took to their oars. The ſky grew more and more louring, which made it neceſſary to haſten as much as poſſible. The men having drank ſome eau-de-vie, pulled ſtoutly, and by dint of arms, and at the riſk of being twenty times overſet, we once more got into tolerable ſmooth water, and coaſted along between the ſhore and the breakers.

DURING the ſtorm, the blacks were as eaſy and unconcerned as if they had been ſafe on ſhore. Their belief in Predeſtination, and their indifference for life, gives them a tranquillity, which all our boaſted philoſophy can never attain to.

I LANDED about nine in the morning at the mouth of the Great-River: M. de Meſſin was agreeably ſurprized at the arrival of his pirogue, which he did not expect that day, and received me with the utmoſt cordiality. His eſtate includes all the valley through which the river flows.—It is imperfectly deſcribed in the chart drawn by the Abbé de le Caille; he has omitted a branch of the mountain, on the right-

right-hand ſhore, which extends towards the promontory *du Tamur*. Moreover, the courſe of the river is not ſo ſtrait as he repreſents it, for at a ſhort league's diſtance from the mouth, it turns to the left hand. This learned aſtronomer having given us a deſcription of the out-line only of the iſland, I propoſe to make additions to his plan*, according as the information I procure in theſe excurſions may furniſh me with opportunity.

THERE is great plenty of every thing at Black-River; of game, veniſon, and both freſh-water and ſea-fiſh. While we were at dinner one day, a ſervant came to tell us that ſome *lamentins* † were ſeen in the bay, we ran down immediately; they caſt nets a-croſs the entrance, and when drawn a-ſhore, we found a great quantity of the ſword-fiſh, of ſkait, two ſea-turtles, and other kinds of fiſh; but the lamentins were eſcaped.

THE utmoſt regularity and good order is obſerved in this, as in every other plantation I have been at. The negroes cabbins are ranged in lines, like tents in a camp. Each man has a ſmall piece of ground allotted him for growing tobacco and gourds;—flocks, and poultry, are bred in great numbers upon theſe plantations. The harveſts are plentiful, but receive great damage from the ſwarms of graſshoppers.

The convenience of commodities from thence to the town, is inconvenient and hazardous, it being impoſſible for a carriage of any burden to get along by land, the roads are ſo bad; and the wind being in general contrary on the voyage from thence to the Port.

† A kind of ſea-cow.

* I wiſh the author had furniſhed us with this plan. *T.*

AFTER

AFTER a ſtay of a few days, I determined to return to town by a tour over the plains *de Villiams*; for this purpoſe my hoſt furniſhed me with a guide, and a pair of piſtols, leſt I ſhould meet with any of the * Maron Negroes.

I ſet out at two in the afternoon for Palma, the plantation of M. de Coſſigni, about three leagues off, where I propoſed to lay that night: there being none but foot-paths over the rocks, I was obliged to walk. When I had gone over the mountains of Black-River, I found myſelf in a vaſt foreſt, through which a narrow path only is grubbed up, and which paſſes cloſe by a lonely houſe, the ſolitary retreat of a man, who in France had ſquandered a conſiderable fortune, and who now drags on a wretched and miſerable life in this gloomy deſart, without property; the land round his houſe not being his own, and without ſociety, except that of a few negroes, his ſlaves. As I paſſed, he was ſitting at his door, in his ſhirt and drawers only, with his legs naked and his ſleeves tucked up, diverting himſelf with rubbing a monkey with the juice of red mulberries, himſelf being all over ſmeared therewith.

* The Dutch who came here in the year 1638, upon forming a ſettlement, found themſelves in want of ſlaves, for the cultivation of their lands, and applied to the French, who were ſettled on the iſland of Madagaſcar, to ſupply them with ſome of the natives from thence for this purpoſe. The French complied, and ſold them fifty, whom they had taken by force from among the inhabitants. Theſe, exaſperated at the outrage, attacked, and maſſacred the invaders.——The poor people who had been ſent to the Mauritius, fled from their ſervitude to the woods, from whence they made ſuch continual incurſions upon their former maſters, that at length they determined to quit the place, rather than be ſubject to the dangers which conſtantly attended them. The ſlaves were now the ſole reſiants; ſuch of their progeny as eſcaped the vigilance of Monſieur de la Bourdonnais, are the Maron negroes, mentioned by the author. *T.*

FROM

FROM thence, about half an hour's walk brought me to the ſide of tamarind-river, whoſe waters flowed with a loud noiſe over a bed of rocks. My black found a ford, and carried me over upon his ſhoulders. I ſaw before me the mountain of three paps, which roſe to a very great height, and on the other ſide was the plantation of Palma. My guide perſuaded me to go along the ſide of this mountain, aſſuring me that we could not fail of finding the path that led to the top. We got quite round it, after having walked above an hour: but ſeeing the man was at a loſs, I returned immediately, and again reached the foot of the mountain, before the ſun was ſet. I was much fatigued, and very thirſty, and could I have got water, would have paſſed the night there. But I determined otherwiſe, and although there was no ſign of a path, began to aſcend the mountain thro' the woods, being ſometimes forced to clamber over huge rocks, or to drag myſelf along by the trees, and at others, being ſupported by my black ſervant, who came after me. I had not walked half an hour, before night came on, and was then without guide, except the ſteepneſs of the mountain. Not a breath of wind was ſtirring, the air was intenſely hot,—and ready to faint with heat, fatigue, and thirſt, I lay down ſeveral times, determining to ſtay all night where I was. At length, after an infinite deal of trouble, I perceived that I aſcended no longer. Soon after, a breeze from the ſouth-eaſt refreſhed me exceedingly, and the appearance of ſome lights at a diſtance, afforded me an additional comfort. The ſide I had quitted was inveloped in total darkneſs.

I NOW began to deſcend, and frequently ſlid down upon my back, without being able to prevent it. The noiſe of a rivulet was my only guide, and I at length reached it, very much bruiſed. Although in a violent

violent perſpiration, I drank heartily, and having felt herbage under my hand, had the additional good fortune to find ſome water-creſſes, of which I ate ſeveral handfuls. I continued to approach the fire I ſaw before me, carrying my piſtols ready cocked in my hand, fearing I might find an aſſembly of Maron negroes; but it proved to be a part of the wood that was lately cleared, in which there were ſeveral trunks of trees ſtill burning. No body was near. I halloo'd, and liſtened, in hopes at laſt to hear the barking of a dog,—but in vain, no other ſounds were to be heard, than the diſtant murmurs of the brook, and the whiſtling of the wind among the trees.

MY black and my guide kindled ſome brands, by the light of which we walked over the aſhes of this burning wood, towards another fire a little farther. Here we found three negroes watching ſome flocks, that belonged to a neighbour of M. de Coſſigni. One of them conducted me to Palma. It was now midnight, and every body was faſt aſleep. A negroe, whom our noiſe had awakened, informed me that his maſter was abroad;—he, however offered me all the accommodation the houſe afforded. I roſe early in the morning, intending to go to Mr. Jacob's, who lived about two leagues off upon the high grounds of *Williams-plains*; a fine broad road being cleared all the way to his houſe, I ſoon arrived there, and was received with his uſual hoſpitality.

THE air is ſo much colder here than at the Port, and the place I had juſt left, that I found the fire-ſide the beſt ſituation towards evening. This part is the beſt cultivated of any in the whole iſland, and is watered by ſeveral rivulets, ſome of which, eſpecially one they call the deep-river, runs in beds

of

of a depth frightful to look down. The road from hence to town running close by the side of this river, on my return I observed it particularly, and suppose I could not be less than three hundred feet above its channel. The sides are covered by five or six stories of very large trees, rising one above another; a sight which gave me a violent swimming in my head.

As I came nearer to the town, I perceived the heat of the air increase, and the herbage insensibly lose its verdure, till I reached the Port, where every thing is dry and barren.

PORT LOUIS, *August* 15, 1769.

LETTER XVII.

JOURNEY ON FOOT OVER THE ISLAND.

AN Officer had propoſed to me a tour round the iſland on foot, but juſt before we were to have ſet out, excuſed himſelf from going,—I therefore determined to go alone.

I KNEW I might depend upon *Côte*, one of the King's blacks, who had accompanied me before; he was little, but he was very ſtrong, of approved fidelity, ſober, of few words, and fearleſs of danger.

I HAD bought a ſlave a little time before, and called him by your name, hoping it would be an omen in his favour. He could not ſpeak French, nor was his conſtitution healthy; but he was well made, and of a very decent appearance.

I TOOK my dog with me by way of guard in the night, and to look out for game in the day time.

KNOWING that I ſhould be very often alone, and that theſe woods were without inns, I provided every thing which I thought might be neceſſary for myſelf or my people. My baggage weighed two hundred pounds, and conſiſted of a kettle, ſome plates, a quantity of rice, biſcuit, maize, a dozen of

of wine, ſix bottles of eau-de-vie, ſome butter, ſugar, citrons, ſalt, tobacco, a ſmall hammock, linen, a plan of the iſland, ſome books, a ſabre, and a cloak.

I DIVIDED the whole into four packs, two of ſixty pounds, and two of forty; and got them tied to the ends of two very ſtrong reeds. *Côte* took the heavieſt, and *Duval* the other. I, for my part, was in my waiſtcoat, and carried a double-barrelled gun, a pair of piſtols in my pocket, and my couteau de chaſſe.

I DETERMINED to begin my courſe on the leeward-ſide of the iſland, propoſing to keep conſtantly cloſe to the ſhore, that I might form a judgment of its defence, and to make obſervations upon any objects of natural hiſtory which might preſent themſelves.

M. de Chazal offered to accompany me as far as his eſtate, ſituated five leagues from the town, in the plains of *Saint Peter*, and M. le Marquis d'Albergati, agreed to do the like.

WE ſet out early in the morning of the 26th of Auguſt, and went all the way along ſhore. From *Fort-Blanc*, to the left of the Port, the ſea waſhes a ſandy ſtrand, that is not at all ſteep, 'till it gets to the point of a plain, on which *Paulm* battery is raiſed; though this ſhore is level, a deſcent would be impracticable, on account of a long bank of rocks, which run along ſhore at two muſquet-ſhots diſtance, and forms a natural defence. From this place the ſhore becomes ſteep, and the ſea runs ſo high, that it would be impoſſible to land hereabouts; and it would be equally impoſſible for cavalry or artillery to make good their landing upon the plain, becauſe of the rocks with which it is covered all over. There are

no trees, except a few *mapous* and *veloutiers*. The ſhore is no longer ſteep at *little-river* bay, where there is a ſmall battery.

HERE we dined with M. de Seligny, a man of ſingular merit. He ſhewed us the plan of a machine, by which he cut a canal to the Neptune, a ſhip that was run a-ground here in the hurricane in 1760. They were two iron rakes, put in motion by two large wheels that were ſupported upon barges; and whoſe effect was increaſed by levers, again ſupported by rafts.

WE ſaw alſo a cotton-mill of his invention, which was worked by water. It was formed of a number of ſmall metal cylinders, in a parallel poſition to each other. Children are taught to hold the cotton to two of theſe cylinders, the cotton paſſes and the ſeed remains. This ſame mill anſwered the purpoſe of a pair of bellows to a forge,—to grind meal,—and to make oil. He informed us, that he had diſcovered a vein of coal, ſome iron ore of an earth very proper for making crucibles, and that the cinders, which are called *nymphea*, burnt with coal, produced glaſſes of a variety of colours. In the afternoon we took leave of this uſeful and unrequited member of ſociety.

WE took a path which was about a muſquet-ſhot from the ſhore, and having forded the river *Belleiſle*, whoſe mouth is very narrow, after walking about a quarter of a league we entered a wood, which leads to M. de Chazal's houſe. This eſtate, which is called *St. Peter's-Plains*, is ſtill more rocky, than the reſt of the way. In many places, the negroes were obliged to lay down their burdens, and to aſſiſt us to clamber. When we were within half an hour's walk of our journey's

journey's end, *Duval*, being no longer able to ſtand under his load, was obliged to lay it down. We were much perplexed by this accident; for night was coming on, and the other negroes were gone before. How was he to be found again if we left him in theſe woods? I ſtruck a light with the lock of my gun, and kindled a fire with ſome ſtraw and dry ſticks; after which we left *Duval* there, and when we got home, we ſent ſome blacks to ſeek for him, and bring his packs.

THE ſhore is very ſteep and craggy between the *Little-River* and *St. Peter's-Plains*. My companions found among the rock the purple-fiſh of Panama, and a variety of other ſhell-fiſh.

Auguſt 27, we reſted the whole day. This ſtony ſoil is well enough adapted to the culture of cotton, the thread of which is but ſhort. The coffee that grows here is of a good quality, but yields very little, as uſual in dry places.

28th, We ſet out at 8 o'clock in the morning, and in the courſe of our journey forded the rivers *Dragon* and *Galet*, at the laſt of which the ſhore ceaſes to be ſteep; and we had from thence the pleaſure of walking upon a fine ſand by the ſea-ſide, along a large plain, which leads as far as the bay of *Tamarinds*. It may be about a quarter of a league broad, and more than a league long. Nothing grows upon it: but I think cocoa-trees might be planted to advantage, as they thrive in a ſandy ſoil. To the right, there is a ſtream of bad water, running the length of the whole wood.

In ſome parts, which the ſea has left dry, we found ſome foſil madrepores, which prove that the ſea

ſea once waſhed over this ſhore. We dined upon the right-ſide of Tamarind-bay, and then my companions left me, and returned back.

FROM Black-River, I had but a ſhort league to M. Meſſin's, and therefore reſolved to ſleep there that night. I forded the bay of Tamarinds, and from thence kept along the ſhore with more difficulty and fatigue than I expected: being very ſteep and craggy all the way 'till we got to Black-River. Among theſe rocks I found many ſorts of *crabs*, and the ſame kind of *boudins* that I have ſpoken of before.

The bottom of this bay is a ſand, and a landing might be effected here, if the ſituation at the entrance did not ſubject thoſe who attempted it to a croſs-firing. A battery at the point of the ſand, on the right ſhore of the Black-River, would be of great ſervice.

THE 29th and 30th, at low water I continued my walk along the ſhore: I found the great *conch*, and a fiſh called the *faux-amiral*.

THE 31ſt, I ſet off at ſix this morning, and paſſed the Black-River at a ford, near the houſe; after this, attempting to cut a-croſs a kind of iſland covered with wood and ſtones, I bewildered myſelf in the graſs, and had ſome difficulty to find the path again; at laſt, however, I did, and it brought me to the ſea-ſide again. All along this ſhore the oyſters ſtick to the rocks in great numbers: *Duval*, my new ſervant, in walking a-croſs one of the mouths of the Black-River, got a very deep cut in his foot, by one of their ſhells. We made a halt about eight o'clock in the morning, and I gave him ſome

ſome eau-de-vie for *Côte* and himſelf to drink, and to bathe his wound. As they were heavily laden, I thought it proper to make two halts in a day, to confine my walks to the morning and evening, and to give them all the refreſhment I could. This little indulgence gave them ſtrength and ſpirits,—they would have followed me to the end of the world.

BETWEEN the two mouths of the Black-River, a ſtag, purſued by hounds and hunters, came ſtrait towards me. The poor beaſt wept and panted: as I could not ſave it, and was unwilling to kill it, I fired one of my charges in the air. He then took to the water, and was overtaken and killed by the dogs. Pliny obſerves, that this animal, when preſſed by the hounds, will fly for protection to a man. I ſtopped at the firſt rivulet I came to, after having paſſed the Black-River; it runs into the ſea oppoſite to a little iſland, called *Tamarina's-iſle*, which is not deſcribed upon the chart; one may get to it on foot at low water, as alſo to the little iſland, called *Morne*, where veſſels ſometimes perform quarantine.

I HAD every thing neceſſary for dinner, but ſomething to eat. Seeing a pirogue of a Malabar fiſherman paſs along the coaſt, I aſked them if they had any fiſh on board; they ſent me a very fine mullet, but would not let me pay any thing for it. I made my kitchen at the foot of a *tatamaque-tree*; I lit a fire, while one of my negroes went in ſearch of wood, and the other of water, that where I was being brackiſh. I made a hearty dinner of the fiſh, upon which I alſo regaled my ſervants.

I OBSERVED ſome pieces of the rocks to be ferruginous, and abounding in ore. There is a ridge of rocks, extending from the Black-River, as far as the

the promontory of Brabant, which is the moſt leeward point of the iſland. There is but one place to land at behind the little iſland, called *Tamarind's-iſland.*

AT two in the afternoon I ſet out again, but walked with more circumſpection than before. I had now twenty leagues to go through a deſart part of the iſland, where there are no more than two inhabitants, except the Maron negroes, who harbour thereabouts. I ordered my men to keep cloſe; and my dog, who uſed always to run before, now kept very near me, and at the leaſt noiſe pricked up his ears and ſtopped: he ſeemed ſenſible that we were not among men. Thus we continued our walk in good order, following the ſhore, which forms an infinite number of ſmall bays. To the left we had the woods, where the moſt profound ſolitude reigns. Behind theſe, runs a tract of hills, the tops only of which we could ſee; the ſoil here is but poor, notwithſtanding which, by the *pelcher*, a ſpecies of tree, brought from India, and ſome other ſigns, it was evident that a ſettlement had been attempted. I had the precaution to take ſome bottles of water with me, and 'twas well I did ſo, for the rivulets marked in the plan, were entirely dried up.

THE continual bleeding of my negro's wound, made me very uneaſy: I walked very ſlowly, and at four o'clock made another halt. As night approached, I would not attempt to go round the promontory, but cut a-croſs the wood, over the iſthmus which joins it to the other mountains. This iſthmus is a hill of a middling height. Upon this eminence I met a black belonging to M. le Normand, whoſe houſe I was going to, and from which I was not above a quarter of a league. This man

went

went on before, while I ſtopped, and looked with delight upon the proſpect of the two ſeas. A houſe built here would be in a charming ſituation, if any freſh water were near. As I deſcended the hill, a black came and brought me a jug of water, and told me, that I was impatiently expected at the houſe. I got there. It was a long building of palliſadoes, covered with the leaves of the *latanier*. Eight negroes belonged to the plantation, and there were nine perſons in family; the maſter, the miſtreſs, five children, a young lady related to the family, and a friend. The maſter was abroad: all this I learnt from the negro as I went along.

THERE was but one large room, and of this the whole houſe conſiſted; in the middle was the kitchen; at one end, they kept their ſtores, and here alſo lay the ſervants; at the other was the bed where lay the maſter and his wife; it was covered with a cloth by way of teſter, upon which was a hen ſitting upon eggs;—under the bed were ſome ducks;—pigeons harboured among the leaves of the roof;—and at the door were three great dogs.

ALL the implements both of the huſbandry and houſewifery were hung up againſt the walls. What was my ſurpriſe at finding the miſtreſs of this wretched dwelling, to be a very handſome genteel woman. Both ſhe and her huſband were of good families in France. They had come here ſeveral years ſince, to ſeek their fortune; and had quitted their relations, their friends, and their country, to paſs their days in this deſart, where nothing is to be ſeen but the ſea, and the frightful cliffs of the promontory of Brabant; but the air of contentment and good-nature about this young mother of a family, ſeemed to make every body happy who came near her.

her. She gave ſuck to her youngeſt child, while the four others ſtood round her, playful and contented.

SUPPER time being come, every thing the houſe afforded was ſerved up with the utmoſt propriety. —This meal appeared a very agreeable one to me. I could not help being ſtruck with the ſight of the pigeons fluttering about the table, the goat-kids and the children at play together, and ſuch a variety of animals in perfect agreement with this amiable family, and with each other. Their peaceful ſports, the ſolitude of the place, the murmuring noiſe of the ſea, all combined to preſent to my imagination, a picture of thoſe times when the children of Noah, deſcended upon a new earth, began afreſh to partake of the domeſtic enjoyments they had ſo long been ſtrangers to.

AFTER ſupper, I was ſhewn to my lodging-room, which was a little hut, newly built of wood, at about two hundred paces from the houſe. The door was not yet put up; but I cloſed the opening with the boards of which it was made. I laid my arms in readineſs, the Maron negroes being very numerous in this part. A few years ago, about forty of them, retired to the promontory, and began to make plantations. An attempt was made to take them; but ſooner than ſuffer this, they all threw themſelves into the ſea.

SEPTEMBER 1, the maſter of the houſe having returned home in the night, perſuaded me to defer my journey till afternoon; promiſing to accompany me part of the way. It was no more than three ſhort leagues to *Belle-ombre*, the laſt plantation, or houſe that I ſhould find. Madame de Normand herſelf,

herſelf, prepared a remedy to apply to the wound of my poor negro. She made over the fire a kind of Samaritan's Balſam, with turpentine, ſugar, wine, and oil. His wound being dreſſed, I ſent him on before with his comrade. At three o'clock, I took leave of this hoſpitable houſe, and of the amiable and excellent miſtreſs of it. Her huſband and I ſet out. He was a very robuſt man; and his arms, legs, and face were exceedingly ſun-burnt. He worked himſelf in the plantation, as well as in cutting down and clearing away trees. Nothing gave him concern, he ſaid, but the ill health his wife brought upon herſelf by bringing up her children; and that ſhe had lately added to the fatigue, by taking upon her the charge of an orphan. He told me only his grievances, for he could not but perceive how ſenſible I was of the happineſs he enjoyed.

We croſſed a rivulet near the houſe, and walked upon the green ſod as far as point *Corail*. Here the ſea runs up into the iſland, between two chains of perpendicular mountains: we followed this chain thro' broken and rugged paths, and ſometimes ſwinging by the rocks. Our greateſt difficulty was on the ſide of the bay, in doubling what they call the Cape. I ſaw ſeveral negroes paſſing it; they ſcrambled along the ſide of the rock, and had they made one falſe ſtep, muſt have fallen into the ſea. In bad weather this paſſage is impracticable, the ſea beating in, and breaking among the rocks in a moſt frightful manner. In a calm, ſmall veſſels can come into the bay, at the end of which they load with wood. Luckily for us, the King's *Senau* the *Deſire*, was then in the bay, and we borrowed her boat to croſs it. M. le Normande went over with me, and we then took leave of each other, and parted.

AFTER

AFTER three hours walking over a green ſod, I reached the other ſide of Point *St. Martin*. Sometimes I walked upon the ſand, and ſometimes upon the turf, which grew in thick tufts like moſs. Here I found a pirogue, in which M. Etiene, partner in the plantation of Belle-ombre waited for my coming. We ſoon got to his houſe, which was ſituated at the entrance of the river *Citroniers*, on the left ſhore of which they were building a ſhip of two hundred tons.

ALL the way from M. le Normand's, the coolneſs of the air and the verdure of the ground is delightful. 'Tis a ſavannah, without rock, lying between the ſea and woods, which have a beautiful appearance.

BEFORE I paſſed the Cape, I obſerved a large ſhelf of coral, above fifteen feet high. 'Tis a kind of breaker, which the ſea has abandoned; at the foot of it, there is a long piece of fenny-ground, which might be eaſily converted into a baſon for ſmall veſſels.

SEPTEMBER 2, my negro being almoſt cured of his wound, by the remedy Madame de Normand had applied to it, I fixed my departure for that afternoon. In the morning I went out in the pirogue between the breakers and the coaſt. The water was clear to the very bottom; and one might ſee a foreſt of madrepores of five or ſix feet high, like trees, ſome of them with flowers growing upon them. Different ſorts of fiſh, and of all colours, ſwam about among their branches; in ſome parts were numbers of beautiful ſhell-fiſh, and in others tunny-fiſh, equally beautiful, which meandered about, as the motion of the pirogue diſturbed and frighted them. I might have made a valuable collection, but I had no diver

diver here, nor any proper iron pincers to raiſe up the plants from this maritime garden, or to root up theſe trees of ſtone. However, I brought away with me ſome of the rock called, the Ear of Midas, the Golden Cloth, &c. &c.

Two officers of the *Deſire* dined with us, who, with Monſieur Etiene, agreed to accompany me as far as the arm of the ſea *de la Savanne*, three leagues off. Nobody lives there, but there are ſome huts made of ſtraw; we had ſent the negroes forward in the morning; and after dinner I followed them by myſelf.

I ARRIVED at *Poſt Jacotet*; a part where the ſea runs up into the land, forming a circular bay, in the middle of which is a ſmall triangular iſland; this creek is ſurrounded by a riſing ground, that gives it the appearance of a baſon. It is open only at the entrance, where the ſea-water enters; and at the other end receives a number of rivulets, that run over a fine ſand, from a piece of freſh-water above, in which were plenty of fiſh. Round this piece of water are ſeveral little hills, riſing one above another in the form of an amphitheatre, and crowned with clumps of trees, ſome ſhaped like pyramids or yews, and others like an umbrella,—behind, and far above all theſe, were the tow'ring tops of a wood of palm-trees, whoſe bending branches looked like ſo many plumes of feathers. This huge maſs of verdure, riſes out of the middle of the green turf, and is joined to the foreſt, and to a branch of the mountain leading to the Black-River. The murmuring of the ſprings, the beautiful greenneſs of the waves, the conſtant, but gentle whiſtling of the winds, the ſmoothneſs of the plain, with the pleaſing umbrage of the high lands, and grateful ſmell of the *veloutiers*, diffuſed around

around me peace and happineſs. I regretted my being alone; – a variety of projects ſuggeſted themſelves to my imagination; and I would have given up all the univerſe beſide, might I but with ſome choſen and beloved objects, have ſpent my days to come in this delightful place.

I QUITTED this pleaſing proſpect with reluctance. Before I had gone two hundred yards from it, there met me a troop of negroes armed with fuſils; upon their nearer approach, I perceived them to be a party ſent out by the police of the iſland; they ſtopped when they came up to me. One of them had got in the ſhell of a gourd, two puppies juſt whelped; another of them led a woman tied by the neck with a cord made of ruſhes; this was the booty they had taken from a camp of Maron negroes, which they had routed. They had killed one man, whoſe *grigris* they ſhewed me,—'twas a kind of taliſman made like a roſary. The poor negro-woman, ſeemed overwhelmed with grief. I aſked her ſome queſtions, but ſhe did not anſwer me. She carried upon her back a bag made of *vacua*, I opened it, and was ſhocked beyond meaſure at finding in it the head of a man. The country before me ſeemed no longer beautiful in my eyes, but was converted to a ſcene of horrors, from which I fled with precipitation.

MY companions met me again as I was with ſome difficulty going down a declivity, towards the arm of the ſea *de la Savanna*; it was now night, and we ſeated ourſelves under ſome trees at the bottom of the bay; where we ſupped by the light of flambeaux.

OUR converſation turned upon the ſubject of the Maron negroes, for they as well as I, had met the party with

with the poor woman, who was carrying, perhaps, the head of her lover! M. Etiene told us, there were troops of them, of two or three hundred in number in the environs of *Belle-ombre*, and that they elected a chief, diſobedience to whoſe orders, was puniſhed with death. They are forbidden to take any thing from the houſes in the neighbourhood, or to go to the ſide of the frequented rivers to ſeek for fiſh or other food. In the night they go down to the ſea-ſide and fiſh; and in the day-time drive the deer or ſtags to the interior parts of the woods, with dogs trained to great perfection for this purpoſe. When there is but one woman in a party, ſhe is reſerved for the chief; but if there are many, they are in common. The children that are born, are immediately killed, leſt their cries ſhould diſcover their retreat. The whole morning is ſpent in caſting lots to preſage the deſtiny of the enſuing day.

He told us, that being a hunting one day laſt year, he met a run-away negroe, whom he purſued and preſented his gun at,—it miſſed fire thrice. He was then going to knock him down with the but-end, but was prevented by two negroe-women, who came out of the wood, and weeping, threw themſelves at his feet. The black ſeized the opportunity and eſcaped. He brought the two generous creatures home with him; he had ſhewn us one of them in the morning.

I HAD obſerved, that by clearing away ſome of the beds of coral, *Poſt-Jacotet*, the chearful place I have juſt deſcribed, might be made a very good harbour for ſmall veſſels. The arm of the ſea *de la Savanna* would alſo ſerve to load, or land goods from barges. This part in general, is by far the moſt beautiful of the whole iſland; but it remains uncultivated,

tivated, a communication with Port-Louis being difficult, on account of the mountains between them, and the wind being ſo ſeldom fair for doubling *Brabant* promontory in returning from the Port.

SEPTEMBER 3, M. Etienne, and M. de Chezemure, Captain of the Deſire, accompanied me as far as the left-hand ſhore of *la Savanne*, which is much ſteeper than the other; in this place, their dogs put up a ſtag; and here I took leave of them, to go alone the twelve leagues that remained, through a deſolate and uninhabited country. I obſerved as I went along, that the meadows were much larger, and the woods thicker and better grown. The mountains run a long way into the land, and the ſummits only of the diſtant ones were to be ſeen.

I EVERY now and then came to a ravin. I forded three different rivers in the courſe of two hours walking, and the ſecond, called the river *Anguilles*, with ſome difficulty; its bottom being covered with rocks, and the current very rapid. It flows from ſprings of a ferruginous quality, which cover the water with an oil, the colour of a pigeon's breaſt.

IN the way, I ſaw a ſparrow-hawk, which makes great havock among the poultry. It was perched upon the trunk of a *latanier*. I preſented at him, within a gun's length; both my primes flaſhed in the pan, without either gun's going off. The bird kept his place, and there I left him. This accident made me look very carefully to my arms, in caſe of an attack from the negroes.

ON the left-hand ſide of the third river, and near the ſea, I made a halt upon a level part of the rocks, under the ſhade of a *veloutier*. My blacks made me a kind

a kind of tent, by throwing my cloak over ſome branches. Here I dined; and they catched me ſome perch and conchs,—and ears of Midas.

Two hours after dinner, I went on again, my guns, and people in good order: there was no need to fear a ſurprize, the plain being entirely open, and the woods at a great diſtance. As the path was a fine ſmooth ſand,—that I might walk the more at eaſe, and not have the trouble of taking off my ſhoes and ſtockings at every ford, I determined to walk barefoot, as the hunters did in the morning. This is not only the moſt natural, but the ſafeſt way of going here, the foot ſeizing or griping the angles of the rocks like a hand. The blacks are ſo expert by conſtant uſe, that they can pick up a pin from the ground with their toes. 'Tis not therefore in vain, that Nature has divided this part into toes, and them again into articulations.

HAVING pulled off my ſhoes and ſtockings while I made theſe reflections, I walked on and forded the firſt river; but in coming out of the water, I received a violent ſtroke of the ſun upon my legs; which immediately became red and enflamed. In croſſing a ſecond, I cut one of my heels, and one toe, and felt the wounds exceedingly painful, when I put my foot in the water. I gave up my project, lamenting that want of cuſtom had deprived me of one of the advantages a man might enjoy here.

I CAME to the ſide of the river *Jacotet*, and croſſed it upon the back of my negroe, at about cannon-ſhot diſtance from its mouth. The water makes a great noiſe in running over the rocks, and is ſo tranſparent, that I could diſtinguiſh the black ſnails that ſtuck to the bottom. I muſt own I ſhuddered at paſſing this

ſtream. It being near ſun-ſet, I determined to go no farther, but walked over the ſtones along its brink, to get to a ſhed which I perceived on one of the points of the mouth, and which I found it impoſſible to reach, the rocks were ſo very rugged. I returned, and again took the path, which led me to the top of the ſlope at the foot of which the river runs. On my left-hand, in a receſs, I ſaw a little clump of branches of trees and liannes, but could not penetrate it. A thought ſtruck me, to cut a way into it with a hatchet, and lay down as in a neſt, thus aſſuring myſelf of a place to ſleep in. But ſome drops of rain falling, a roof, though ever ſo bad a one, appeared to be the better ſhelter. I went down the receſs towards the ſea, and was very happy to find on my right-hand, the ſhed I had ſeen from the oppoſite ſhore. 'Twas nothing but a mere roof of leaves of *latanier*, built out from the rock; on my right, was the paſſage I had in vain attempted, and on the left, that I had deſcended by,—and before me was the ſea.

EVERY thing ſeemed equally fitted for my ſafety and convenience: They made me up a bed of dry leaves, upon which I lay down. My two paniers were laid one on the right, the other on the left ſide of me, one of my blacks at each entrance, my piſtols under my head, my gun at my ſide, and my dog at my feet.

THESE diſpoſitions were ſcarcely made, before a ſhivering ſeized me. This was the conſequence of the ſtroke of the ſun, which is generally ſucceeded by a fever.

MY legs became very much enflamed and painful. They made me ſome lemonade, and by the light of a candle which they lit, I made notes of my obſer-

obſervations during this journey, and corrected ſome errors in the chart.

THE whole coaſt, from the æſtuary *la Sevanné*, is ſteep and inacceſſible. The rivers that empty themſelves here have ſteep banks.—It would be impoſſible for cavalry to get along at all, and the march of an enemy might be impeded with great eaſe, every river being a ditch of a depth abſolutely frightful. As to the country, 'tis by far the moſt beautiful in the iſland.

AT midnight the fever left me, and I fell aſleep. At half paſt three o'clock, my dog waked me, by running from under the ſhed, and barking as loud as he could. I called to *Côte*, who roſe; we went out, but could ſee nothing but a ſtarry ſky. My black returned in a few minutes, and ſaid, he had heard ſome body whiſtle twice, as if in the wood. I ordered them to light a fire and keep watch, and placed *Côte*, armed with my ſabre, as a centinel.

THE ſea came up almoſt as far as my cottage. The noiſe of its breaking among the rocks, added to the darkneſs of the night, inclined me to reſt, but my apprehenſions would not ſuffer me. I was five leagues from any houſe, and if the fever ſhould again attack me, no aſſiſtance could be had. I had no fears about the Maron negroes; my ſervants were both reſolute men, and my ſituation was ſuch as would enable me to ſtand a ſiege. All things conſidered, I thought myſelf very happy that I did not take up my lodging in the thicket.

AT day break, I gave a glaſs of eau-de-vie to my body-guards, and renewed my journey. Their

burdens were much lightened, by the conſtant conſumption of our proviſions.

SEPTEMBER 4, It was half paſt five when I ſet off, reſolving not to ſtop 'till I got to a houſe. We preſently came to the ſide of a ſmall river, and a little farther on to a rivulet almoſt dried up. After an hour's walk, the beautiful turf I had walked on from the promontory of *Brabant* ended, and the ſoil became ſtony and covered with rocks, as in the other parts of the iſland. The graſs here is of a finer verdure, and of a large blade,—very proper for paſture.

I FORDED an arm of the ſea called *du Challon* over a ſand-bank. The deſcription of it in the plan is not a good one. The ſea runs deep into the land, through a narrow channel, a-croſs which gratings might be put, and there would then be a fine reſervoir for fiſh. On the left ſhore there was a ſhed, in which I reſted myſelf.

ABOUT half a league from thence the path divides, I took that to the left, which leads into the woods; it conducted me to a wide road, marked with a track of wheels,—an appearance that pleaſed me very much, as it was a ſign of my being near a houſe of ſome note, and the print of a horſes hoof was at that time a much more deſirable ſight than the foot-ſtep of a man. We ſoon arrived at a houſe, but the maſter was out; I therefore went back, and ſtruck into a path, that led through the woods to the plantation of M. Delaunay. I got here in good time, for my legs were ſo terribly inflamed, that I could ſcarcely walk. He lent me a horſe to carry me two leagues off to a plantation occupied by ſome prieſts.

I CROS-

I CROSSED ſucceſſively the rivers de la *Chaux*, and des *Grecles*, three quarters of a league from the laſt, I croſſed one of the bays to the ſouth-eaſt of the Port in a pirogue.

THE ſides of this bay are covered with mangliers. The views here are delightful, the country being hilly, and covered with plantations, interſperſed with a great number of clumps of orange-trees. It was ſix o'clock when I arrived at the houſe of the prieſt, who had the management of the plantation. My legs were bathed with elder-flower water, and I ſlept with great comfort.

SEPTEMBES 5, I was now but one league from the Great Port. The good Prieſt lent me a horſe, and I got to the town about ten o'clock; it conſiſts of about a dozen houſes. The moſt remarkable buildings are, a large mill nearly fallen to ruins, and the Governor's houſe in little better condition. Behind the town is a high mountain, and before it the ſea, which forms a bay two leagues deep, including the rocks at its entrance, and four leagues long from point *Cocos* to point *Diable*. I alighted at the houſe of the curate.

SEPTEMBER 6, 7, and 8, I was charmed with my hoſt, and with the country I had ſeen; but neither he, nor his pariſhioners drank any thing except water. It is frequently a month's voyage from hence to Port-Louis, and the inhabitants are upon theſe occaſions in abſolute want of every article that comes from Europe. I gave part of my proviſions to M. Delfolie, my hoſt, who was a good ſort of man.

THE ſouth-eaſt port was formerly inhabited by the Dutch, one of whoſe ancient buildings is now uſed as a chapel. There are two ways to enter the Port, one at point *Diable*, for ſmall veſſels; the other, which is much wider, is by the ſide of an iſland towards the middle. At each of theſe places is a battery, and at the bottom of the bay, is a third called the Queen's battery.

IF my indiſpoſition would have permitted me, I ſhould have examined the variety of ſtrange bodies thrown a-ſhore by the ſea, in order to have formed ſome opinion of the lands to windward of the iſland; but I could not undergo the fatigue, for my legs were very painful, and the ſkin peeled off entirely.

The following is all the information I could get:

WHALES frequently come into the ſouth-eaſt port, where it would be very eaſy and ſafe to harpoon them. Fiſh is very plentiful upon this coaſt, eſpecially ſhell-fiſh, of the moſt beautiful kinds. They gave me ſome oyſters of a violet colour, from the mouth of the river *la Chaux*, and a ſpecies of criſtalization from the neigbouring river, *Sorbes*.

I SAW for three nights, a comet, which firſt appeared a fortnight before, the nucleus was pale and nebulous, its tail white and very long, the rays diverged but little. I drew the poſition of it in the ſky, which was a little below the three Kings. Its courſe was eaſtward, and conſequently its tail in a weſterly direction. At half paſt two on the morning of the 6th, its elevation was about 50 deg. above the horizon,—my obſervation could not be very accurate for want of the proper inſtruments.

THE

THE air of this place was cool and refreſhing, and the country beautiful and fertile: but the inhabitants are ſo few, that during a whole day, I ſaw but two negroes paſs through the ſtreet.

SEPTEMBER 9, I now found myſelf able to continue my journey, eſpecially as the part I went through was inhabited. I determined to ſtop for the night at four leagues diſtance from the mouth of the Great River, which is ſomething broader than that of the ſame name, near Port-Louis.

WE ſet out at ſix in the morning, and followed the courſe of the ſhore, which is broken in ſeveral places by bays, on the ſides of which grow *mangliers* in abundance. It is not impoſſible but that the ſeeds may have been brought by the ſea from ſome land to windward. We went along the ſide of a range of high mountains to our left,—they were covered with wood. The country is divided into ſmall hills, on which grows a very fine graſs; the provender of cattle, bred here in great numbers; 'tis a pleaſant part of the iſland, but very fatiguing to travel over.

AFTER walking about two hours, we ſaw upon an eminence a fine houſe built of ſtone. Here I ſtopped to refreſh myſelf; it belonged to a wealthy inhabitant, whoſe name was V***. He was abroad.—His wife was a raw-boned Creole, who according to the cuſtom of the country went barefoot. I found her in a room, with five or ſix girls about her, and as many maſtiff dogs, who immediately attacked my dog, and were very near ſtrangling him. She turned them all out, of the room, and placed at the door to keep them out a negroe wench, who had nothing on but a ragged petticoat. I begged leave to ſtay in her houſe during the heat of the day. The firſt compliments

were ſcarcely ended, before one of the dogs found means to get in among us again, and the uproar was renewed. Madame de la V—— held in her hand the prickly tail of a dried thornback, with which ſhe gave the poor negroe a cut a-croſs the bare ſhoulders, (which were marked immediately with a long wheal) and then ſhe gave a back ſtroke to the dog, who ran howling away.

THIS Lady told me, ſhe had narrowly eſcaped being drowned in going in a pirogue to harpoon turtles among the rocks. She ſeemed to value herſelf much upon going to hunt the Maron negroes in the woods; but ſhe told me, the Governor had deprived her of her favourite ſport, which was ſtag-hunting, and added, "I ſhould have been "better pleaſed, if he had ſtuck a dagger in my "heart."

AT four in the afternoon I left this negroe-hunting Bellona; and took a path, which went a-croſs point *Diable*, ſo called, by the firſt navigators on this coaſt; becauſe it is ſaid, that their compaſs varied without their being able to account why it did ſo. We croſſed the mouth of the Great River in a canoe,—it is navigable for nothing larger, on account of a ſand-bank which runs a-croſs it, and a cataract formed by it, about a quarter of a league from hence.

THERE is an earth redoubt on the left ſhore, at the beginning of the road that leads to *Flacq*, and along which we went, the rocks being ſo rugged upon the ſhore in this part, as to render it impaſſable. Here we once more entered the woods, which are very fine, and abound in orange-trees. A quarter of a league from hence I came to a houſe,—the maſter

maſter of it was not at home; I ſtopped notwithſtanding.

I HAD walked two hours and a half in the morning, and as much in the afternoon.

SEPTEMBER 10, we kept the road to Flacq, 'till we got about a quarter of a league beyond the river *Seche*, which we forded as we had done the reſt: then taking a path on the right-hand, I came to the ſea-ſhore at *Eaudouce* bay, where there was a poſt of thirty men.

WE now went again along the ſhore, it being very paſſable. Côte carried me over an arm of the ſea, which was rather deep. The ſand is almoſt every where covered with rocks, except a long meadow of dog's tooth-graſs, of the ſame ſort I had ſeen at Belle-ombre. All this part is dry and barren; the woods are low and thin, and extend as far as the mountains which are ſeen at a diſtance: this plain, over which are three roads, is not good for much, it reaches as far as a ſettlement called *Quatre Cocos*. There is no other water, but a brackiſh well, dug in the rocks, full of veins of iron ore.

AFTER dinner, a path on our left-hand, led us into the woods, which were very ſtony. We came to the brink of the river *Flacq*, at about a quarter of a league from the mouth, and croſſed it upon planks. In going along the ſide of this river, I paſſed ſeveral plantations, of which there are many hereabouts, and came down to a ſtore-houſe on the left, where there is a poſt, commanded by M. Gautier, the Captain of a company.—He deſired me to lodge there that night.

SEP-

SEPTEMBER 11, I laid by all day. This part, which is called *Le Flacq*, is the beſt cultivated in the iſland; rice grows in great plenty. There is a creek in the rocks, by which barges can come and load with the greateſt convenience.

SEPTEMBER 12, my hoſt accompanied me part of the way; we went in a pirogue to poſt *Fayette*, as far as which, the coaſt is entirely covered with rocks and mangroves. Near the landing place, we ſaw the trace of a turtle in the ſand; this induced us to land in ſearch of it, but we found nothing but its neſt. We forded the bay *des Aigrettes*, which is a large arm of the ſea. I was upon the ſhoulders of *Côte*, when the ſea became ſo deep towards the middle of the paſſage, that I feared he would not be able to keep his feet; the water came up to his neck, and wetted me very much. A little farther on, we came to another æſtuary, called the *bay de Requins*. I obſerved many parts of the rock pierced with a number of round holes, of about a foot diameter. Some of them were as deep as my cane,—and I imagined that the lava of ſome volcano, having formerly flowed through the wood, had conſumed the trunks of the trees, and left the print of the place they had grown in.

FROM the poſt of *Fayette* to the river *du Rempart*, the meadow is continued. This part is alſo well cultivated, and here we dined. I then croſſed the river, and went on alone, 'till I came to the river *des Citroniers*. The ſun was juſt ſetting, when I perceived an inhabitant at a little diſtance, who invited me very kindly to his houſe.—— his name was Le Sieur Goule.

SEPTEMBER 13, In the morning he offered me his horſe to go to the town, which was but five leagues off.

off. I would willingly have gone round the whole iſland, but there remained ſtill four leagues of the way totally without inhabitants, or water; beſides, from point *des Canoniers*, to the Port was a part of the coaſt that I already knew.

I ACCEPTED the offer my hoſt had made me, and left this quarter, which is called *La Poudre d'or*, on account, ſay they, of the colour of the ſand, which however, appeared to me to be white, as in other places. I croſſed the river, (which is called by the ſame name as the quarter) and then entered a large wood, the ſoil of which is good, but without water. In the quarter of Pamplemouſſe, which was the next I came to, the lands ſeem quite exhauſted, the inhabitants having cultivated them for thirty years, without ever laying dung upon them *. I forded this river, and the rivers *Sethe*, and *de Lataniers*, and in the evening arrived at the Port.

THE moſt fertile ſoils I had ſeen on my tour were all ſtony, except ſome parts of Pamplemouſſe.

I DID not find one monument worthy of remark. There are three churches in the iſland; one at Port-Louis, the ſecond at the ſouth-eaſt port, and the third, and handſomeſt at Pamplemouſſe; the two others being ſmaller than the churches of a little country village. They had built one at Port-Louis, upon a very handſome plan, but the roof being too much raiſed, the walls were inſufficient to bear its weight, and reſiſt the force of the hurricanes. What remains of it is now uſed as a ſtore-houſe, of which there are but

* The author calls it *fumer*,—ſmoking them. Saturn was called *Stercutius* by the ancients, for having taught them this method of improving their lands. *T.*

few

few in the iſland, and the greater part of thoſe built of wood, a material by no means proper for public buildings, eſpecially here, where the ſtrongeſt beams will only laſt forty years, if the worms do not deſtroy them ſooner; beſides, ſtone is found every where in great abundance, and the iſland is ſurrounded with coral, for lime. The greateſt difficulty is in laying the foundations, for which, the rocks muſt be blown up with gunpowder; and yet, all things conſidered, I do not think, that a building in ſtone would coſt one third more than one of wood. The latter is ſoon built, and as ſoon decays. Thoſe who are too eager for enjoyment, never enjoy any thing to perfection.

THE iſland is reckoned to be about forty five leagues in circumference. It is watered by a number of rivulets, which run in deep channels from the center of the iſland into the ſea. Although we were now in the dry ſeaſon, I croſſed above four and twenty, flowing with freſh and wholeſome water. I ſuppoſe that about half this iſland lays fallow, one quarter of it conſiſts of plantations, and the remainder of paſture grounds, of various kinds.

LET-

LETTER XVIII.

Of the COMMERCE, AGRICULTURE, and DEFENCE of the ISLE OF FRANCE.

ONE letter will not ſuffice to relate all that may be ſaid upon theſe three ſubjects,—which are boundleſs. To begin with the firſt, I do not know a corner of the earth whoſe wants are ſupplied from ſo many, or ſo diſtant parts. Their diſhes and plates come from China; their linen and clothes from India; their ſlaves and cattle from Madagaſcar; their proviſions, or part of them, from the Cape of Good-Hope; their money from Cadiz, and their government and laws from France. M. de la Bourdonnais wiſhed to have made it the ſtaple of the trade to India—a ſecond Batavia.

WITH the view of great genius, he had alſo the weakneſs of a man: place him but upon a point, and he will make the centre of all things.

ALL ſtaples augment the expences of trade, and ſhould never be eſtabliſhed but when abſolutely neceſſary. No nation has any ſtaple between the Indies and Europe, but where the trade is immediately concerned. Batavia is a ſpice iſland.

THE Iſle of France is looked upon, as a fortreſs which aſſures to us our poſſeſſions in India; with equal

equal reaſon Bourdeaux might be deemed the citidel of our American colonies. The Iſle of France is fifteen hundred leagues from Pondicherry. Suppoſe a garriſon ever ſo numerous were to be maintained here, yet, a ſquadron muſt rendezvous in a port, where the worms will totally deſtroy a ſhip in three years. Neither pitch, tar, cordage, or maſt timber are found here; nor is the wood of a proper ſort for any other branch of building.

WE muſt afterwards run the riſk of a ſea-engagement. If beaten, we cannot ſuccour the place; if victorious,—our ſoldiers, carried ſuddenly from a temperate to a very ſultry climate, will be unable to endure the fatigue of the ſervice.

If half the money had been expended upon ſome part of the malabar coaſt, or at the mouth of the Ganges, in lieu of the Iſle of France, we might have had a reſpectable fortreſs in India itſelf, and the troops would have been ſeaſoned to the climate; nor would the Engliſh in this caſe have been maſters of Bengal. From them we may learn how to form a a ſettlement, and protect it when formed. They have an army of three or four thouſand Europeans upon the very banks of the Ganges; beſides a number of diſtant iſlands under their dominion: they have nothing now to do but to eſtabliſh themſelves on the weſtern ſide of Madagaſcar: but in all their enterprizes, they never while purſuing the means, loſe ſight of the end. A flock of ſheep would be in a dangerous ſituation, were the dogs, their protectors, at fifteen hundred leagues diſtance from them.

WHEREFORE then do we continue to keep this Iſle of France? To ſupply us with coffee, and as a port for our ſhips to put into upon occaſion.

THIS

THIS country which produces little elſe than a ſmall quantity of coffee, has wants, enough, to engage all its attention to them alone, this muſt be entirely ſupplied from France for ſome time, or the colony will never arrive at a ſtate to be of the leaſt real uſe to the mother country. Our commodities, our cloths, our linnens, our manufactures are in plenty, and the cotton-works of Normandy are far better than thoſe of India with which they clothe the ſlaves. No money but our own ſhould circulate here. A paper currency is ſet on foot but is of no great credit; at the beſt rate of exchange, thirty three, and frequently fifty per cent is loſt by it.—Indeed it is impoſſible that this paper money can loſe leſs;—it is payable in France ſix months after ſight, it is ſix months upon the voyage thither, and ſix months on the return; this is eighteen months. Ready money is reckoned here, to produce thirty three per cent in eighteen months, if employed in the maritime trade; and therefore who ever gives paper for piaſtres, juſtly looks upon himſelf as running riſks of more ſorts than one.

WHATEVER is bought for the king, is ſold to him at one third leſs than its real worth. The corn of the inhabitants,—all buildings erected for him,—ſtores, and expeditions of every ſort. You may have a ſtorehouſe built for 20,000 francs, ready money; * if you pay in paper, the price is 10,000 crowns—and upon a matter of this kind, there never is any diſpute.

ALL payments however are made in this paper money. 'Twas once thought it never would have gone

* A franc or livre is 10d. ½ Engliſh.

out

out of the iſland; but now not only this goes, but the piaſtres alſo, and never to return; the colony would elſe be in want of every thing.

OF all the places to which it trades, the only one that is indiſpenſably neceſſary at preſent to its exiſtance, is Madagaſcar, for ſlaves and cattle. Theſe iſlanders were formerly content with the wretched ſufils that were offered them in barter, but they muſt now have piaſtres, and thoſe milled at the edges—All the world is riſing into perfection.

FURTHER, if there is the moſt diſtant proſpect of this iſland being a flouriſhing ſeat of trade, the port muſt be cleared out without delay, there being now ſeven or eight hulks of ſhips each forming an iſland, which is every day increaſed by the madrepores growing round them.

No perſon ſhould be allowed to poſſeſs lands ſituated conveniently for the port, but what ſhould pay for them accordingly. Nor ſhould any perſon procure for himſelf grants of evtenſive and the fineſt lands in the iſland, to ſell them again to others. This abuſe is expreſsly prohibited by the laws: but the laws here are not put in execution.

THE breeding of the beaſts of burthen ſhould be attended to, and eſpecially of aſſes, ſo uſeful in a mountainous country: an aſs will carry twice the load that a negroe can ſtand under. The black is of a little higher price, but the aſs is the ſtrongeſt and the happieſt of the two.

They have made many laws relative to the planting buſineſs. No people in the world know their own intereſt better than the inhabitants of the Iſle of France, nor what is beſt ſuited to the ſoil they poſſeſs.

THERE

THERE are a number of ſoldiers here who are entirely uſeleſs,—theſe men might have lands allotted for cultivation, and aſſiſtance for clearing them, and might marry the free negroes. Were a plan of this kind adopted, in ten years the whole iſland would turn to profit in one way or another; and we ſhould have an eſtabliſhed nurſery for ſailors and ſoldiers to ſerve in India. This idea is ſo very ſimple, that I do not at all wonder it has been rejected as contemptible.

I leave to others the propoſing of means for alleviating the ſeverities of the bondage of the poor negroes;—ſome abuſes are too enormous to admit of mediation.

IF you talk upon the mode of defence proper for this iſland, a ſea officer, will tell you a ſquadron ſhould be kept here conſtantly; an engineer would have it fortified; a brigadier is perſuaded that a few regiments would beſt anſwer the purpoſe; and the inhabitants think the iſland will of itſelf, defend itſelf. The three firſt of theſe objects depend upon the will of the adminiſtration and may partly be diſpenſed with, altho' in ſome reſpects neceſſary. I ſhall enlarge upon the laſt, as I wiſh you to be acquainted with ſome of the œconomical views of the people here.

I obſerved, in my tour round the iſland, that it was almoſt entirely encircled at ſome diſtance from the ſhore, by a belt of rocks: that in thoſe parts where the belt was not continued, the coaſt is formed of rocks high and inacceſſible. This diſpoſition, ſo excellent for its defence, could not fail to aſtoniſh me; but it is nevertheleſs certain, the iſland would be totally

inacceſſible, but for ſome clefts in the rocks which afford a paſſage; of theſe I counted eleven. They are formed by the currents of the river.

'IN the ſecuring of theſe paſſes then, conſiſts the defence of the iſland from without—ſome of them might be ſhut up by means of floating chains, and others by batteries raiſed upon the ſhore.

As that part between the rocks and the ſhore is navigable for boats, ſmall armed ſloops might be uſed with good effect, when the paſs is not within cannon-ſhot of the coaſt.

BEHIND the rocks, the ſhore is very acceſſible; the landing being upon a level. Theſe parts however might be rendered impracticable by art, as thoſe of the bays of the South Eaſt port are by nature. Nothing need be done but to plant *Mangliers*, a ſort of trees which growing far out into the ſea form foreſts abſolutely impenetrable. This expedient is ſo very eaſy, that nobody has yet thought of it.

IF in thoſe parts of the coaſt where the ſurf runs high, ſome of the rocks are found to be acceſſible, theſe being no where of much extent, might be defended by raiſing a wall or line; by keeping chevaux de friſe to throw into the water, or by *Raquettes* which will grow in the drieſt places; (but the *Manglier* will grow if there is ever ſo little ſand;) by trees, prickly ſhrubs, &c. They have beſides, this advantage, they coſt but little; and time, the deſtroyer of every other fortification, increaſes and ſtrengthens that I am recommending. So much for the defence againſt the attacks by ſea.

I conſider this iſland as a circle, and the rivers flowing from the centre, as ſo many Radii of it. The

The ſhores might be cut either perpendicularly, or with a talus, or raquettes and bambos might be planted upon the ſides towards the town, and the oppoſite ſhore laid open for three hundred toiſes. By this means the ground between every two rivulets is rendered a ſtrongly fortified place, and the channel of each rivulet a very dangerous ditch. Every attempt to paſs, on whatever ſide it is made, muſt be perceived by the inhabitants, who would be enabled thereby to act for their defence accordingly; nor could any enemy arrive at the town but through a thouſand difficulties and obſtructions. This ſyſtem of defence might be adopted in all ſmall iſlands, whoſe waters conſtantly flow from the centre to the circumference.

BETWEEN the two wings of the mountains which encompaſs the town and the port, there is need but of little fortification, except that part towards the ſea. Upon the iſle of *Tonneliers* ſhould be built a fort, with batteries placed in a kind of covered ways to enfilade each other. Theſe ſhould be mounted with a number of mortars,—ſo terrible to ſhipping. To the right and left as far as the ends of the promontories, the land ſhould be protected by ſtrong and reſpectable lines. Nature has already done her part towards the defence of the right ſide,—the river *Latanier* running the length of the whole front.

A deep valley is formed at the back of the town by the mountains, and includes a vaſt extent of ground, whereon all the inhabitants of the iſland and their ſlaves might be aſſembled. The other ſide of theſe mountains is inacceſſible, or might be eaſily made ſo, at a trifling expence.

THIS place has beſides, a peculiar advantage; for in the very higheſt part of the moun

tain, at the place called *Le Pouce*, there is found a large piece of land, planted with trees, among which run two or three rivulets of very fine freſh water. There is no aſcending thither from the town, but by a very intricate path. It has been attempted by force of mines, to make a wide road of communication with the interior part of the iſland; but the back of the mountains are of ſo prodigious a height and ſteepneſs, that ſcarce any thing except a negroe or a monkey can ſcramble over them. Four hundred men in this poſt, if furniſhed with proviſions, could never be driven from it; and there is ſpace enough for the whole garriſon.

If to theſe natural means of defence, we add thoſe which ſhould be furniſhed by government,—a ſquadron, and proper troops, an enemy would have the following obſtacles to ſurmount.

I—HE would be obliged to hazard the event of an engagement by ſea.

II—SUPPOSING the enemy victorious, our ſquadron might retard his deſcent, by making him bear to the windward of the iſland in the courſe of the engagement.

III—THE difficulties of a diſembarkation would remain to be encountered with. The coaſt can be attacked only at particular points, and no where upon a front of any extent.

IV—THE paſſage over each rivulet would be attended with an engagement to his manifeſt diſadvantage; if by the method I have propoſed, the one ſide of the rivulet ſhould be laid quite open.

V.

V—HE muſt form the ſiege of the town on a ſide where there is but little room: muſt ſuſtain the fire from the promontories which command this place; and open his trenches among rocks.

VI—SHOULD the garriſon be driven out of the town, they might retire to the height abovementioned,—a ſecure retreat, well provided with water, and where they might be conſtantly ſupplied with ſuccours from the interior part of the iſland.

THIS would be a proper time for me to ſpeak of the defence of the neighbouring iſland of Bourbon; but I am yet a ſtranger to it. I know only that a landing is impracticable; that it is well peopled, and grows more corn than it can conſume; yet does every one contend that the fate of Bourbon depends upon that of the Iſle of France. Is this, * becauſe the military cheſt is kept here?

* The author has ſuppreſſed ſome obſervations relative to the Iſle of France, leſt what he propoſed as a means of its defence, might be of advantage to an enemy about to attack it. This ought to have occurred to thoſe who have publiſhed plans and charts of our colonies, of which our enemies have more than once availed themſelves to our diſadvantage. The Dutch will permit no plans of their iſlands to be engraved. Manuſcript ones are given to each Maſter of a veſſel, who at his return delivers them again into the proper office at their admiralty.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

PART II.

A VOYAGE, &c.

LETTER XIX.

DEPARTURE FOR FRANCE—ARRIVAL AT BOURBON—HURRICANE.

HAVING obtained permiſſion to return to France, I prepared to embark on board L'Indien, a ſhip of 64 guns.

I gave *Duval*, the ſlave that bore your name his freedom; but lent him to a good man of the country, until he had diſcharged a debt he owed to the adminiſtration. Had he ſpoken French, I would have brought him to Europe. His tears teſtified his regret at parting with me, of which he ſeemed more ſenſible than of the pleaſures of liberty. I propoſed to have bought the freedom of *Cote* alſo, if he would have attached himſelf to my fortune, but he declared there was a girl in the iſland whom he could not part with. The ſituation of the King's ſlaves is very eaſy. Here he found himſelf happy, which was more than I could promiſe he ſhould be if he went with me. I ſhould moſt gladly have brought back my Favourite to his own country, but ſome months before I left the iſland my poor dog was taken from me,—in loſing him I loſt a faithful friend that I frequently regret.

SOME days before I departed, I reviſited Autouru, the iſlander of Taïti, who had been brought thus far on his way home from Europe.* On his paſſage from his own country to France, he was open, gay, and a little of the libertine—on his return, I obſerved he was reſerved and polite,—he had ſtudied the graces. He was enchanted with the Opera at Paris, and imitated the airs and dances he had heard and ſeen there. He had a watch, upon which he deſcribed the hours by the ſeveral employments of each,—He ſhewed the hour of riſing, of eating, of going to the opera, of walking, &c. &c.—†This man was very intelligent, and expreſſed by ſigns whatſoever he pleaſed. ‡Although the men of Taïti paſs for having had no communication with other nations before the arrival of Monſieur Bougainville, I obſerved, however, one word in their language and a cuſtom which they have in common with other people; *Mattè*, in the language of Taïti, means to kill. The *Mattè* of Spain, and the *Mat* of Perſia bears the ſame ſignification.§ They are alſo uſed to paint their ſkins, as was done by many people of the old and new world. They knew what iron is, though they have none of it—they call it *aurou*, and aſk for it with eagerneſs. But all theſe analogies tend little to the tracing of the ori-

* He was brought from Otaheitie by Monſieur Bougainville in 1769—and ſtaid eleven months in Paris. *T.*

† Aotouru by the accounts of ſeveral Engliſhmen who ſaw him in France, was very far from the intelligent man deſcribed by our author.—*T.*

‡ Aotouru himſelf told Monſieur Bougainville that an Engliſh ſhip was at Otaheitie, near a twelvemonth before his arrival there—and Monſieur Bougainville as plainly, as illiberally inſinuates, that the Engliſh introduced the venereal diſeaſe among thoſe iſlanders. *T.*

§ The author might have added the Italian *ammazare*, to *kill*. *T.*

ginal

ginal of a nation. Follies, wants, and evils of human nature appear naturalized among all people. A more certain mode of diſtinction is the knowledge of their languages. All nations in Europe eat bread; but the Ruſſians call it *Gleba*, the Germans *Broth*, the Latins *Panis*, the inhabitants of lower Britainy, *Bara*.

Autouru ſeemed chagrined at his long ſtay in the Iſle of France. He walked, but always alone. I perceived him one day in a profound meditation, looking at a black ſlave at the door of the priſon, round whoſe neck they were rivetting a large chain. It appeared a ſtrange ſpectacle to him, that a man of his colour ſhould be thus treated by white people, who had loaded him with benefits and preſents when at Paris. But he knew not, that by their paſſions, men are carried acroſs the ſeas, and that the morality by which they are influenced in Europe, within the tropics, actuates them no longer.*

I embarked on the 9th of November 1770, many Malayans accompanied me to the ſea-ſide, and with tears deſired my ſpeedy return. Theſe good people never loſe the hope of ſeeing again thoſe who have

* To corroborate this opinion of the author's, I beg leave to inſert an extract from the hiſtory of the conqueſt of New Spain, publiſhed at Madrid in the year 1632 by Caſtillo,—"We bought three ſhips of the governor of Cuba,—who propoſed that we ſhould pay him for them with ſlaves, which we were to bring from the ſmall iſlands between Cuba and Honduras—We rejected this propoſal, telling him, that neither God, nor the King had ordained theſe people, (by nature free,) to be enſlaved."—Caſtillo afterwards engaged with Cortes, and accompanied him in his expeditions to Mexico, during which there is no doubt but he got rid of thoſe ſcruples which occaſioned the above recited anſwer to the governor of Cuba. *T.*

done

done them ſervice. I recognized among them a maſter carpenter who had bought my books of geometry, although he could ſcarcely read. He was the only man in the iſland who would have them.

WE were detained in the road eleven days by a calm. The evening of the 20th we ſet ſail, and at three in the afternoon of the 21ſt anchored in the road of St. Dennis, at Bourbon.

THIS iſland is 40 leagues to the leeward of the Iſle of France. 'Tis one days ſail only to Bourbon, but a month is frequently ſpent in returning. It appears afar off, like a part of a ſphere, with very high mountains, the land of which is cultivated to the height of 800 toiſes,—They reckon 1600 perpendicular toiſes to the ſummit of the three *Salaſſes*, which are three inacceſſible pikes.

THE ſhore here is very ſteep; the ſeas roll with a great ſurf, preventing all but pirogues from approaching the land without being daſhed to pieces. At St. Denis a draw-bridge is contrived for the unlading of ſloops, which projects more than fourſcore feet over the ſea, and is ſuſtained by iron chains. At the end of this bridge there is a rope ladder, up which thoſe who would land, muſt climb. There is this one place only in the whole iſland, where any body can land, without firſt jumping into the ſea.

As the Indien was to ſtay here three weeks to lade coffee, ſeveral of the paſſengers propoſed paſſing ſome days on the iſland, and even waiting at St. Paul, ſeven leagues to leeward, 'till the ſhip ſhould go thither to compleat her cargo.

PROVISIONS

PROVISIONS being ſhort on board, I with the Captain and ſeveral officers of other veſſels, joined with them in this plan.

THE 25th in the afternoon I embarked alone in a little yawl, and notwithſtanding the breakers ran very violently, by keeping the boats head to the ſea, I diſembarked at the bridge. We were an hour and an half making this trip, which was not half a league.

I waited upon the commanding officer. He told me there was no inn at St. Denis, nor in any part of the iſland, and that ſtrangers lodged with ſuch of the inhabitants as they had concerns with. Night came on and having no traffick here, I prepared to return aboard, when this officer offered me a bed.

I next payed my reſpects to M. de Cremon, commiſſaire ordonateur who invited me to his houſe while I ſtaid on ſhore. This was the more agreeable to me as I wiſhed to ſee the volcano of Bourbon, to which I knew M. de Cremon had once made an excurſion.

BUT I did not find an opportunity,—the way is very difficult—few of the inhabitants know it, and the journey would require an abſence of ſeven or eight days.

FROM the 26th to the 30th the ſwell was ſo great that few of the boats uſed in the harbour came to land. Our Captain availed himſelf of a fortunate minute to get on board his ſhip, whither his affairs called him, but the bad weather prevented his re-landing.

THE

THIS breeze, which always comes from the S. W. riſes at 6 in the morning and ends at 10 at night. While I ſtaid, it blew with equal violence day and night.

THE firſt of December the wind fell, but there roſe from the open ſea a monſtrous gale, which blew upon the ſhore with ſuch violence that the centinel on the bridge was obliged to quit his poſt.

THE top of the mountains is covered with clouds, very thick and motionleſs. The wind continued to blow from the S. W. but the ſea ran from the W. Three large waves beat ſucceſſively over each other and appeared along the coaſt like three ranges of little hills. From the upper part of them iſſued ſeveral jets déau which fell down again in white ſurf, and ruſhed violently upon the ſhore forming an arch, which rolling as it were round itſelf, foamed to a height more than fifty feet perpendicular.

The air was ſo heavy that we breathed with difficulty, the ſky was dark, clouds of ſea-fowls came from the main and took refuge on the land. The birds and animals on ſhore ſeemed diſturbed. Even men were ſeized with an inward horror at ſeeing a dreadful tempeſt in the midſt of a calm.

ON the morning of the 2d the wind fell entirely, and the ſwell increaſed—The rolling waves were more numerous and came from a greater diſtance. The ſhore, beaten by the ſea, was covered with a white moſs like ſnow, which heaped together like packs of wool. The veſſels in the harbour rode very hard at anchor. There was now no doubt but that the hurricane approached. The pirogues which were on the Galet were drawn a great way upon land, and every one haſtened to ſecure his houſe with cords and ropes.

THERE

THERE lay at anchor L'Indien, Le Penthievre, L'Alliance, Le Grand Bourbon, Le Gerion, a Gaulette and a little boat. The ſhore was lined with people, drawn thither by the ſpectacle the ſea preſented, and the danger of the ſhips.

ABOUT noon the ſky loured prodigiouſly and the wind began to freſhen from the S. E. We began to fear that it would turn and blow from the W. and run the veſſels aſhore. From the battery, the ſignal was given them to depart, by hoiſting the flag, and firing two guns with ſhot in them. Immediately they cut their cables and ſet ſail. The Penthievre not able to ſhip her boat, left it behind. L'Indien being anchored farther at ſea, went before the wind with her four principal ſails. The reſt got out as faſt as they could.. Some blacks who were on board a ſhallop took refuge on board the L'Amitie. The little boat and the Gaulette were already in the rolling waves, in which they were every now and then loſt to the eye; they ſeemed fearful of putting to ſea, but at length, they alſo hoiſted ſail, exciting uneaſineſs and prayers for their ſafety, in all who beheld them. At two hours end the whole of this fleet diſappeared in the N, W. being invelop'd in a gloomy horizon.

ABOUT 3 in the afternoon the hurricane announced itſelf by a moſt tremendous noiſe; the wind blew from all quarters ſucceſſively. The ſea—beaten—and agitated to the greateſt degree—threw upon the land, clouds of foam, ſand, ſhells and ſtones. Some boats refitting at fifty paces from the water-ſide were buried under the ſurge. The wind carried away a ſheet of lead from the roof of the church, and the colonade from the governors houſe. The hurricane laſted all night and till 3 in the morning.

ON

ON the 6th, the two firſt ſhips that returned to anchor were the little boat and the Gaulette; they brought a letter from the Penthievre which had loſt her top-gallant-maſt. Themſelves had met with no accident—The loweſt ſtations are often the leaſt liable to misfortune.

The 8th, the Gerion appeared—ſhe had been driven ſo near the Iſle of France that ſhe put into the harbour; where ſhe learnt that the Garronne Pink, foundered while at anchor.

By about the 18th we had tidings of all the ſhips, except the Amitié and the Indien. The ſize and ſtrength of the Indien ſeemed to ſecure her againſt all events, and we did not doubt but that ſhe would continue her voyage to the Cape of Good Hope, there, take in proviſions, and go from thence to France. Beſides I knew this to be the Captain's intention.

THE 19th in the morning, a ſignal was made that a ſhip was in ſight; it was the Normande, Pink; ſhe paſſed by St. Denis, and anchored at St. Paul. She came from the Iſle of France and was going to the Cape for proviſions. This opportunity was too favourable a one to be neglected by me and an officer with me. Monſieur and Madamoiſelle Cremon provided us with beds and linen for the voyage, we got horſes and guides to go to St. Paul, and were accompanied thither by a relation of Monſieur Cremon.

MY effects being yet on board the Indien, I was deſtitute of every thing except linen, which I had brought on ſhore with me.

WE ſet out on the 20th at eleven in the morning, we had ſeven leagues to go. The Pink was to ſail in the evening, and therefore having no time to loſe, we took leave of our hoſts.

OUR

OUR horſes began forthwith to climb the mountain of St. Denis, by zig-zag paths, paved with ſharp ſtones. They were very ſtrong, and ſure footed, and, according to the cuſtom of the country, they were unſhod.

AT two leagues and a half from St. Denis we found under ſome citron trees at the brink of a rivulet, a dinner, which M. de Cremon had cauſed to be provided for us.

AFTER dinner, we deſcended and came to the *Grand Chaloupe*. 'Tis a frightful valley formed by two mountains that are very ſteep. We walked part of the way which the rain had rendered dangerous, and at the bottom we found ourſelves between the two mountains, in the ſtrangeſt ſolitude I had ever ſeen; we were in a manner between two walls, the heavens only being over our heads: we croſſed the rivulet and came at length to the ſhore oppoſite to the *Chaloupe*: at the bottom of this abyſs, there reigns an eternal calm, however the winds blew on the mountains.

AT two leagues from St. Paul we entered into a large plain of ſand extending as far as the town, which is built like St. Denis. There are large lawns encompaſſed with hedges in regular rows, and in the middle is the houſe were the family lives. Theſe towns have the air of large villages.

ST. PAUL is ſituated by the ſide of a great lake of freſh water, of which a port might I apprehend be made.

IT was night e'er our arrival there; we were much fatigued, and knew neither where to lodge, nor where to get bread, there being no baker at St. Paul.

MY

MY firſt care was to ſpeak with the Captain of the Normande whom I luckily found on ſhore. He told us he would not venture to take us on board without an order from the Governor of the Iſle of France, who was then at St. Denis, and that he ſhould not ſail till next morning.

I immediately wrote to the Governor and to Madamoiſelle Cremon. I gave my two letters to a black, promiſing to reward him if he returned by eight o'clock next morning. It was then ten at night and he had fourteen leagues to travel on foot.

I found out my comrades, who were ſupping at the ſtore keepers. They lodged us in a houſe belonging to the King, unfurniſhed, except with chairs, of which we made beds. We were up betimes. At nine o'clock the anſwers to my letters were brought by a black whom my meſſenger had ſent in his room. What was our aſtoniſhment when we read that the Governor had left the maſter to his diſcretion.

AT laſt after many negotiations and after having given him bills of payment for our paſſage he agreed to take us, and the departure of the ſhip was deferred till next day.

THE following account is all I could collect relative to Bourbon. It is well known that the firſt inhabitants were pirates, who cohabited with negroe women from Madagaſcar. They fixed here firſt about the year 1657. The India company had alſo at Bourbon a factory, and a governor who lived with them in great circumſpection. The Viceroy of *Goa* came one day to anchor in the road of St. Denis and was to dine with the Governor. He had ſcarcely

ſet

ſet his foot on ſhore before a pirate ſhip of fifty guns anchored along ſide his veſſel and took her. The Captain landed forthwith, and demanded to dine at the Governor's. He ſeated himſelf at table between him, and the Portugueze Viceroy, to whom he declared, that he was his priſoner. Wine and good cheer having put the ſeaman in good humour, Monſieur Desforges (the Governor) aſked him at how much he rated the Viceroy's ranſom. "I muſt have (ſaid the Pirate) a thouſand piaſters." That's too little (ſaid Monſieur Desforges,) for a brave fellow like you, to receive from a great Lord like him,—aſk enough, or aſk nothing." "Well, well, then I aſk nothing, (replied the generous Corſair)—let him be free."

THE Viceroy reimbarked inſtantly, and ſet ſail, happy at having eſcaped on ſuch good terms. This piece of ſervice of the Governor was recompenſed ſhortly after by the court of Portugal, who preſented his ſon with the order of Chriſt.

THE Pirate afterwards ſettled on the iſland, and was hanged, a conſiderable time after an amneſty had been publiſhed in favour of his companions, and in which he had failed to get himſelf included. This injuſtice was the work of a * *Conſeiller*, who was deſirous of appropriating his ſpoils to his own uſe. But this laſt villain, a little while after, came to nearly as wretched an end, although the juſtice of men did not reach him.

It is not long, ſince the laſt of theſe pirates whoſe name was *Adam*, died, aged 104 years.

* In the Frenth courts of judicature, the judges are called *Conſeillers* (Counſellors), and the Barriſters, are called *Avocats* Advocates. *T.*

WHEN more peaceable occupations had ſoftened their manners, there remained among them a ſpirit only of independance and of liberty, which corrected itſelf ſtill more in the ſociety of many worthy people who eſtabliſhed in Bourbon for the purpoſe of cultivation. Sixty thouſand blacks are reckoned to live in Bourbon and only five thouſand inhabitants. This iſland is thrice as populous as the Iſle of France, on which it depends for its export traffick. It is alſo much better cultivated, having produced twenty thouſand quintals of corn and as much of coffee, beſides rice and other proviſions for home conſumption. Herds of oxen are not ſcarce there. The King pays * fifteen livres per Cwt. of corn, and the inhabitants ſell † a quintal of coffee for forty-five livres in piaſtres, and ſeventy livres in paper.

THE principal place in Bourbon is St. Denis, the reſidence of the governor and council. Nothing worth remark is to be ſeen here except a redoubt built of ſtone, but ſituated too far from the ſea,—a battery before the governor's houſe, and the drawbridge before-mentioned. Near the town is a large plain called Le Champ de Lorraine.

THE ſoil ſeemed to be more ſandy at Bourbon than at the Iſle of France: it is mixed at ſome diſtance from land, with the ſame kind of ſmall pebbles with which the ſea ſhore is covered,—a proof that the ſea has withdrawn itſelf, or that the iſland is riſen out of the ocean. This I think might be the caſe, if we may judge from the mountains, which are full of chaſms, and very rugged and broken in their interior parts. When we ſpeculate upon nature, oppoſite opinions always pre-

* About thirteen ſhillings ſterling.
† A quintal is equal to a cwt. Engliſh.

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ſent themſelves with a nearly equal appearance of probability.—The ſame effects frequently reſult from different cauſes. This obſervation might be extended very far, and ſhould induce us to be very moderate in our deciſions.

A man of eighty years of age aſſured me that he had been one of thoſe who took poſſeſſion of the Iſle of France when the Dutch abandoned it. Twelve Frenchmen were detached for that purpoſe, who landed in the morning, and in the afternoon of the ſame day, an Engliſh ſhip anchored there, for the ſame purpoſe.

THE manners of the firſt inhabitants of Bourbon were very ſimple, the greater number of the houſes were not made to ſhut,—a lock was a curioſity. Some people even put their money in a tortoiſe-ſhell over their door. They dreſſed in blue cloth, went bare-footed, and lived upon rice and coffee; they imported but little from Europe, content to live without luxury ſo they lived without want. They joined to this moderation the virtues which ever attend it: good faith in commerce, and generoſity in their proceedings. As ſoon as a ſtranger appeared, the inhabitants came to him, and as a ſtranger offered him their houſes.

The laſt war in the Indies has made a change in their manners. The volunteers of Bourbon diſtinguiſhed themſelves in it by their bravery; but the ſtuffs of Aſia and the military diſtinctions of France, thereby got footing in their iſland. The children, richer than their parents require to be treated with more conſideration. They have now no enjoyment of an unnoticed good-fortune, but ſeek in Europe, pleaſures and honours, in exchange for domeſtic happineſs, and the quiet of a country life. The attention of the fathers being

chiefly fixed upon their ſons, they ſend them to France, from whence they ſeldom return. Hence it is, that in this iſland there are more than five hundred marriageable girls, who are likely to die without huſbands.

We went on board the Normande on the 21ſt in the evening. We found a caſe of wines, of liquors, coffee, &c. which Monſieur and Mademoiſelle Cremon had cauſed to be put on board for our uſe. We were received at their houſe with the hoſpitality of the ancient inhabitants of Bourbon, and the politeneſs of Pariſians,

I am, &c.

BOURBON, *December* 21, 1770.

LET-

LETTER XX.

DEPARTURE FROM BOURBON, ARRIVAL AT THE CAPE.

WE left the bay of St. Paul at ten o'clock at night. The ſea here is calmer, and the anchorage fafer than at St. Denis, the road of which is ſpoiled by a vaſt number of anchors left there by ſhips. Their cables cut preſently. Yet the ſeamen prefer St. Denis.

When the wind blows into the bay of St. Paul, there is no getting out of it, and if a veſſel ſhould run on ſhore, ſhe muſt certainly be loſt; the ſea breaking upon a very high ſand.

On the 23d we loſt ſight of Bourbon. The ſervices we had received from Monſieur and Mademoiſelle de Cremon while we ſtaid, the fair winds, a good table, and the company of Monſieur de Roſbos our captain condoled us for our diſappointment in not finding the Indienne.

WE pitied the paſſengers on board of her, who had to undergo at once, very bad weather, and want of proviſions.

THEY reckon ninety leagues from Bourbon to the Cape. On the 6th of January 1771, in the morning we ſaw Point Natal ten leagues a head of us. In three days we hoped to be on board the Indienne. We went before the wind all the way till Monday. It fell calm in the evening, and was ſultry hot. At midnight it light'ned prodigiouſly, and the horizon was every where covered with large and heavy black clouds. The ſea ſhone with the fiſhes which played round our ſhip.

At three in the morning a contrary wind blew from the W. with ſuch violence that it obliged us to make for the Cape under our mizen. The tempeſt drove on board of us a little bird like a titmouſe. The coming of land birds on board of ſhips is always a ſign of bad weather, as it proves that the violence of the ſtorm extends far over the land.

ON the third day of the ſtorm we perceived that our mizen-maſt was ſprung four feet above the yard —we reefed the ſails, ſtrengthened the maſt with ropes and ſplints of wood, and ſtood for the Cape under a mainſail.

THE ſea was tremendous and hid the horizon from us. We were much ſurprized to ſee within cannon-ſhot a Dutch veſſel ſteering as we did. It was impoſſible to ſpeak with her; the fifth day the wind abated. The mizen-maſt was examined, and found abſolutely broken through. This accident cauſed us to redouble our efforts to reach the Cape.

THE bad weather occaſioned us to loſe way, which the calm now prevented our recovering.

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ON the twelfth we again ſaw the Dutch ſhip, and ſpoke to her. She very warily came up to us with her matches alight, and her guns run out: ſhe came from Batavia, and was going to the Cape.

AT length on the ſixteenth of January we ſaw the Cape, over our ſtarboard quarter. We beat about all night. On the ſeventeenth in the morning a violent gale blew. The air was darkened with a thick fog, which totally hid the land. We were near miſſing the entrance of the bay when we perceived in a part which cleared up for a moment, a corner of the table mountain. We directly loughed up, and about noon found ourſelves near the coaſt, which is very high. It is entirely bare of trees; the higher part riſes to a point, formed by the declivities of parallel rocks; it reſembles the walls of an old fortification with their talus.

WE came under the land. At night we found ourſelves behind the lion mountain, which at a diſtance appears like a lion couchant. The head is formed by a great rock, and detached from the body, which is compoſed of the ridges of different hills. From the head of the lion, they give ſignals to ſhips.

Here the wind failed us, being ſheltered from it by the lion. We were forced, in order to enter the bay, to paſs between the iſland of Roben, which we ſaw before us on our left, and a neck of land called the point, which is found at the foot of the lion. We were within two cannon-ſhot, and our impatience redoubled. From hence we could perceive the ſhips in the road, and the Indienne could not be the leaſt remarkable among them.

AT laſt the tide making, we ſaw, from the tops, twelve veſſels ſucceſſively appear, which were lying at anchor. But none of them had French colours. It was the Dutch fleet.

We caſt anchor at the mouth of the bay. At three in the afternoon, the Commandant of the bay came on board, and aſſured us that the Indienne had not appeared.

At the bottom of the bay we ſaw the table mountain, which is the higeſt land on this coaſt. Its top is level, and ſteep on all ſides, like an altar: the city is at the foot of it, upon the edge of the bay. There frequently gathers upon the table, a thick fog, heaped up as it were, and white as ſnow. When this happens, the Dutch ſay, the cloth is laid.

THE Commandant of the bay hoiſts his flag, as a ſignal for the veſſels to be upon their guard, and a prohibition for the ſloops to put to ſea. From this cloth deſcend whirlwinds mingled with fog like long flakes of wool. The earth is covered with clouds of ſand, and ſhips are often forced to ſet ſail. This gale ſeldom riſes in this ſeaſon but at about ten in the morning, and laſts till evening. Sailors are very fond of the land at the Cape, but are afraid of the road, which is moſt dangerous from April to September.

IN 1722 the whole India fleet periſhed at anchor, exeept two ſhips. Since that time no Dutch ſhip is allowed to anchor there after the ſixth of March. They go to Falſe-bay, where they are under ſhelter.

AN attempt was made to have formed the road into a harbour with only one opening, by joining the point *aupendus* to the iſle of Roben; but it did not ſucceed.

I hoped to have landed that evening, but was prevented by a breeze from off the land.

EARLY in the morning the Normande anchored nearer to the town.—It is compoſed of white ſtones in ſtrait rows, which at a diſtance look like houſes built with cards.

AT ſun riſe, three ſhallops very prettily painted came on board us. They were ſent by the town's-people, who invited us to land and lodge among them. I went on board a ſhallop of a German's, who aſſured me that for my money I ſhould be well accommodated at Monſieur Nedling's.

IN our way acroſs the road, I reflected upon the ſingular ſituation I was in; to find myſelf, without clothes, money, or acquaintance, among Hollanders, at the very extremity of Africa. But my reflections were interrupted by a ſpectacle quite new to me. We paſſed by a number of ſea-calves, lying at their eaſe upon floats of ſea-weed, like the long horns with which ſhepherds call their flocks together: Penguins ſwam quietly within reach of our oars; ſea fowls came and perched upon the ſhallop, and on my landing upon the ſand I even ſaw two pelicans at play with a large maſtiff, and taking his head into their great beak.

I conceived a good opinion of a land, in which hoſpitality and good will ſhewed themſelves ſo conſpicuouſly even among the brute creation.

CAPE OF GOOD-HOPE, *January* 10, 1771.

LET-

LETTER XXI.

Of the CAPE, our excurſion to CONSTANCE and the TABLE MOUNTAIN.

THE ſtreets at the Cape are very ſtrait, ſome of them are watered with canals and moſt of them planted with cheſnut trees. It was very pleaſing to ſee them covered with leaves in the month of January. The front of the houſes were ſhaded with their foliage, and at the two ſides of the doors were ſeats of brick or turf, on many of which ſat ladies with clear and ruddy complexions. I was rejoiced, at once more ſeeing the countenances and the architecture of Europeans.

I walked through ſome part of the place, with my guide, to Madame Nedling's, a fat Dutchwoman, who was very ſprightly. She was drinking tea among ſeven or eight officers of the fleet, who were ſmoaking their pipes. She ſhewed me a very neat apartment and aſſured me that every thing in her houſe was at my ſervice.

WHEN a man has ſeen one Dutch town he has ſeen them all: 'tis the ſame here,—the order of each houſe is alike. The cuſtom of Madame Nedling's was this, there was always company in the parlour, and a table covered with peaches, melons, apricots, raiſins, pears, cheeſe, freſh butter, wine, pipes and tobacco.

and tobacco. At eight o'clock tea and coffee is ready for breakfaſt. At noon they have game and fiſh in plenty for dinner—at four they drink coffee and tea, at eight they have a ſupper as plentiful as their dinner,—Theſe good people are eating from morning till night.

THE expence of boarding in this manner, was formerly no more than half a piaſtre, or fifty French ſols (a trifle more than two ſhillings) per day, but ſome French officers of the marine, in order to diſtinguiſh themſelves from other nations, raiſed the price to a piaſtre, which is now commonly paid.

THIS price is enormous, when we conſider the great plenty of proviſions;—it is true, that more elegance is to be found here than in our beſt taverns. The ſervants of the houſe are at your command; you may invite whom you pleaſe, and may paſs ſome days at your landlord's country-houſe, and have the uſe of his carriage, without any additional expence.

AFTER dinner I went to ſee Monſieur Tolbac, the Governor, a man of eighty years of age, whoſe merit procured him this government fifty years ago. He invited me to dinner the next day. I had apprized him of my ſituation, of which he ſeemed very ſenſible.

I THEN walked in the Company's garden; it is divided into four quarters, and watered by a rivulet. Each quarter is bordered by a row of cheſnut-trees, twenty feet high. Theſe palliſadoes ſhelter the plants from the wind, which always blows hard; they have even had the precaution to defend the young trees of the avenues, by a ſcreen of reeds.

I SAW

I SAW in this garden the plants of Aſia and Africa, but particularly the trees of Europe, covered with fruits at a ſeaſon when I had never before ſeen leaves on them.

I RECOLLECTED that an Officer in the King's ſervice, named the Viſcount du Chaila, had at my leaving the Iſle of France, given me a letter for Monſieur du Berg, Secretary of the Council. This letter was in my pocket, having had no time to put it among my other papers on board the Indienne, I therefore waited on Monſieur de Berg, and delivered it to him.

HE received me very cordially, and as he made me an offer of his purſe, I made uſe of his credit for ſuch things as I abſolutely wanted. I aſked him if I could not procure a paſſage on board an India ſhip, ſix of which were then going away, and the other ſix were to go in the beginning of March.

HE aſſured me it was impoſſible;—that the Dutch India Company had abſolutely forbidden it. Indeed the Governor had told me as much, I was therefore reduced to the neceſſity of ſtaying at the Cape till ſome other opportunity offered of getting away.

AN unforeſeen accident had brought me thither, and I hoped for another that ſhould carry me away again.

HOWEVER, the ſociety of a good tempered and happy ſet of people, added to the plenty of every ſort of proviſions, made my confinement very ſupportable.

MONSIEUR de Berg's ſon invited me to go to Conſtance, a famous plantation of vineyards, ſituated about

about four leagues off. We ſlept at his country-houſe, behind the table-mountain, at two ſhort leagues diſtance from the town. We walked thither through a beautiful avenue of cheſnut-trees. We ſaw there—vineyards, ripe for vintage—orchards, cheſnut-groves, and a very great abundance of fruits and vegetables.

THE next day we continued our route to Conſtance; it is a little hill, riſing to the north (which is here the ſide of the ſun at noon). On our approach, we paſſed through a wood of ſilver trees. (*Arbres d'Argent*;) They reſemble the pine-tree, have a leaf like the willow, and are covered with a white down, which is very ſhining.

THIS foreſt ſeemed to be all of ſilver. When the wind blew them about and the ſun ſhone, each leaf glittered like a plate of metal. We walked through theſe groves, ſo rich and ſo delightful, in order to look at the vines, which though leſs ſplendid in appearance, are of far greater utility.

A BROAD avenue of old cheſnut-trees conducted us to the vineyard of Conſtance. Over the front of the houſe we ſaw a vile painting of a ſtrapping girl, and ugly enough, reclining on a pillar. I took it for a Dutch allegorical figure of chaſtity: but they told me it was the portrait of a Madam Conſtantia, daughter of a Governor of the Cape. He cauſed this houſe to be built with deep ditches round it like a fortification. He propoſed to raiſe it a ſtory or two higher, but was prevented by orders from Europe.

WE found the maſter of the houſe ſmoking his pipe in his night-gown. He carried us into his cellar, and made us taſte his wine. It was in little caſks called *alverames*, containing about ninety pints, ranged

ranged very regularly under ground. There were thirty of them. This vineyard, in common years, produces two hundred. He ſells the red wine at thirty-five piaſtres per alverame, and the white for thirty. The eſtate is his own, conditionally, that he ſhall reſerve ſome wine yearly for the Company, who pay him for it. This he told us himſelf.

HAVING taſted his wine, we went into his vineyard. The taſte of the muſcadine grapes was perfectly like that of the wine. The vines are not upon eſpalieres, and the grapes are but a little way from the ground. They let them ripen till the fruit is about half preſerved by the ſun. We taſted another ſort of raiſins, which are very ſweet, but not muſcadine. They make a wine of them which is of an extravagant price, but is a very fine cordial.

THE Conſtance wine, derives its quality from the particular nature of the ſoil. They have planted the ſame ſtocks, and treated them in the ſame manner at a place called Lower-Conſtance, a quarter of a league from hence but they have degenerated; as I perceived when I taſted them. The price, as well as the taſte is very inferior, it being ſold for twelve piaſtres the *alverame*; there are ſome knaves at the Cape, who ſometimes are too ſharp for ſtrangers in this particular.

NEAR the vineyard is a garden of immenſe extent, I ſaw in it, moſt of our fruit-trees, in hedges and eſpaliers, loaded with fruit. They are rather inferior to ours, except the grape, which I prefer. The olives here are not pleaſant.

WHEN we returned from our walk, we found a plentiful breakfaſt; our landlady overwhelmed us with

with kindneſs; ſhe deſcended from a French refugee*, and ſeemed in raptures at the ſight of one of her countrymen. Her huſband and ſhe ſhewed me a large hollow cheſnut-tree, before the door of the houſe in which they ſometimes dined. Their union was like that of *Baucis* and *Philemon*, nor were they leſs happy,—except that the huſband had the gout, and the wife cried when any body ſpoke of France.

FROM Conſtance to the Cape you travel through an uncultivated plain, covered with ſhrubs and plants. We ſtopped at Neuhaſen, one of the Company's gardens; 'tis laid out as thoſe in the town are, but is more fertile. All this part, is not expoſed to the wind, like the territory of the Cape where ſo much duſt is blown up, that moſt of the houſes have double ſaſhes to the windows, to ſecure them. In the evening we arrived at the town.

SOME days after, my landlord, Monſieur Nedling, invited me to his country-houſe, near that of Monſieur de Berg. We ſet out in his voiture, *(whether coach or cart does not appear)* drawn by ſix horſes. We paſſed many days there in the moſt delightful tranquillity. The ground was ſtrewed with peaches, pears, and oranges, which nobody gathered; the walks were ſhaded with moſt beautiful trees. I meaſured a cheſnut-tree, which was eleven feet in circumference; it is ſaid to be the moſt ancient tree in the whole country.

THE 3d of February my hoſt propoſed to ſome Hollanders, to go upon Tableberg, a ſteep moun-

* The Abbé de la Caille ſays, that the French tongue was no longer ſpoken among the deſcendants of the Refugees,—except by the few then alive, who were the immediate children of thoſe who left France, between the years 1680, and 1690. T.

tain,

tain, at whoſe foot, the town appears to ſtand. I was of the party. We ſet out at two o'clock in the morning, on foot. The moon ſhone very bright. We left on our right a rivulet, which runs from the mountain, and directed our courſe to an opening in the middle, and which appeared from the town like a chaſm in an old wall. On our way we heard ſome wolves howl, and fired ſeveral guns to diſperſe them. The way is rugged to the foot of the mountain, but from thence upwards, is much more ſo. The ſeeming apertute in the table, is an oblique ſeparation, of more than muſquet-ſhot wide at its lower entrance; above, it is not more than two toiſes. This cavity is like a very ſteep ſtair-caſe, filled with ſand and looſe pieces of rocks. We climbed it, having to the right and left, precipices two hundred feet high. Great maſſy pieces of ſtone project, and are ready to roll down.—The water drops from the cracks of the rocks, and nouriſhes a variety of aromatic plants. We heard during this excurſion, the howlings of bavians, a ſort of large monkeys, reſembling bears.

AFTER three days and a half's fatigue, we reached the top of the table. The ſun roſe over the ſea, and its rays enlightened on our right-hand, the ſteep ſummits of the tiger, and of four other chains of mountains, the moſt diſtant of which ſeemed the higheſt. On our left, and a little behind us, we ſaw, as upon a plan, the Iſle of Penguins, then Conſtance, Falſe-Bay, and the Lion-Mountain: before us was the Iſle of Roben. The town was at our feet. We diſtinguiſhed even the ſmalleſt ſtreets of it. The vaſt ſquares of the Company's garden, with its avenues of cheſnuts, and its lofty eſpaliers, appeared but as a parterre, with borders of box; the citadel as a little pentagon, the ſize of one's hand, and the India ſhips, as walnut-ſhells. I felt a kind of

of pride at the thoughts of my elevated ſtation, 'till I ſaw eagles hovering above me, ſo high, that they were nearly out of ſight.

AFTER all, it would have been impoſſible to have thought, but with contempt of ſuch trifling objects, and eſpecially of men who appeared to us like ants, if we had not felt the ſame wants as ever. We were cold and hungry. A fire was kindled, and we breakfaſted. After breakfaſt, our Dutchmen hoiſted a cloth at the end of a ſtick, as a ſignal of our arrival: but in about half an hour they took it down, leſt it ſhould be miſtaken for a French flag. The ſummit of Tableberg, is a plain flat rock, which I take to be about half a league long, and about a quarter broad. 'Tis a ſpecies of white quarry, covered here and there, with about an inch or two's depth of black mould, mixed with ſand and white gravel. We found ſome little pools of water, formed by the clouds, which frequently are ſtopped here.

THE ſtrata of this mountain are parallel; I could find no foſils there. The lower rock is a kind of brown free-ſtone, which turns to ſand if expoſed to the air. Some pieces of it reſemble pieces of bread, with their cruſt. Although the ſoil of the ſummit has ſo very little depth, it grows a prodigious number of plants.

I GATHERED ſix ſpecies of the *immortals*, ſome ſmall myrtles, a filex, which ſmells like tea, a flower like the imperial, of a fine purple-colour, and many others whoſe names I did not know. I found there, a plant, whoſe flower is red, but without ſmell; by its appearance, one would have thought it a tuberoſe. Each ſtalk has two or three leaves turned up together, and holding a little water. The moſt ſingular

of all, becauſe unlike to any vegetable I had ever ſeen,—is a flower, round like a roſe, of the ſize of a ſhilling, and entirely flat. This flower glitters with the utmoſt brilliancy—It has neither ſtalk nor leaf—It grows very thick upon the gravel, to which it is held by imperceptible fibres. When taken up into the hand, nothing can be perceived but a ſlimy ſubſtance.

HERE are five entire plants, which ſeem to affect in this configuration, a reſemblance to only one part of what is common to other plants. Firſt the Noſtoc, which is only a ſap, as it were; ſecondly a chevelu, (a ſmall root or fibre iſſuing from another root) which grows upon the tops of nettles; thirdly, a lichen, or moſs, reſembling a leaf; fourthly, the ingulated flower of the table-hill; fifthly, the truffle of Europe, which is a fruit. I might add, the root of the groffe (or groffo) of the iſle of France, if it was not an inſtance by itſelf.

I AM much inclined to believe, that nature has adopted this plan among animals.—I know many, marine ones, eſpecially, which in form reſemble the members only of other animals.

IN my walk, I reached the extremity of the table, from whence I hailed the appearance of the Atlantic Ocean, for having doubled the Cape of Good Hope, you are no longer in the Indian ocean. I did homage to the memory of Vaſco de Gama, who dared firſt to go round this promontory of tempeſts. All maritime nations ſhould have combined to erect a ſtatue of him at this place, before which I would moſt willingly have made a libation of Conſtance wine, in honour of his heroic perſeverance. It is however doubtful, whether Gama was the firſt who opened a commerce with the Indies by

by the Cape of Good Hope. Pliny ſays, that Hanno went round from the ſea of Spain as far as Arabia, as may be ſeen, ſays he further, by the memoirs he has left of that voyage in writing. Cornelius Nepos * declares, he had ſeen a Captain of a ſhip, who flying from the anger of King Lathyrus, went from the Red Sea to Spain. And long before this, even Cælius Antipater, affirmed, that he had known a Spaniſh merchant who traded by ſea to Æthiopia.

HOWEVER this be,—the Cape, ſo terrible to mariners for its tempeſtuous ſea, is a vaſt mountain,—ſituated ſixteen leagues from hence; it gives its name to this town, notwithſtanding ſo far off.——It terminates the moſt ſouthern part of Africa. In treaties, it is looked upon as a point, beyond which, naval captures are lawful many months after the Princes have been at peace in Europe.

PEACE has frequently been ſeen here on the right, and war on the left hand between flags of the ſame nations; but it has been more often ſeen, that they have maintained a good underſtanding in theſe roads, when diſcord has reigned in every place elſe through-

* Neco, King of Egypt, ſent out ſome Phœnicians ſhips with orders to go down the Red-Sea, and having gone round thence to the north-ſea—to return home through the Pillars of Hercules. —They landed in Africa, ſowed corn, waited the harveſt, and then again embarked,—they did the like the year following, and in the courſe of the third year landed in Egypt, having paſſed, as directed, between the Herculean columns, and through the Mediterranean ſea. —— Herodotus, from whom this account is taken, ſays, "On their return they related, what, if others give "credit to, I confeſs I cannot, viz. *that*, in their way round "Africa, the ſun was on their right-hand." *T. See* HEROD. 4. book, *for the account of this expedition, and of another undertaken by command of* XERXES.

out the two hemiſpheres. I could not but behold with admiration, this happy ſhore, which war has never yet made deſolate; and which is inhabited by a people, uſeful to the whole world, from the reſources of its œconomy, and the extent of its commerce. The diſpoſitions of men are not entirely dependent upon the climate they live in; nor is this wiſe and peaceable nation indebted for their manners to the ſoil of their country. Piracy, and civil wars agitate the Regencies of Algiers, Morocco, and Tripoli; but at the other extremity of Africa, the Dutch have eſtabliſhed a ſettlement bleſſed with agriculture and concord.

I BEGUILED my walk by theſe pleaſing reflections, ſo rarely to be made in any other part of the world; but the heat of the ſun obliged me to ſeek for a ſhelter. There is none but at the entrance of the ravin. Here I found my companions repoſing by the ſide of a ſpring. As they began to grow tired, they determined upon returning. It was high noon.—We deſcended, ſome by ſitting down and ſuffering themſelves to ſlide,—others, upon their hands and knees. The rocks and ſand gave way when we trod upon them. The ſun was nearly vertical, and the rays reflected from the collateral rocks, made the heat almoſt inſupportable. We frequently quitted the path, and fled to the ſhade of ſome point of the rock to take breath. My knees failed; and I had a violent thirſt upon me: towards the evening we arrived at the town. Madame Nedling expected us, and had prepared refreſhments againſt our return. We had lemonade, with nutmeg and wine in it. Of this we drank without danger, and went to bed. No excurſion had ever proved ſo entertaining to me, nor was reſt ever before ſo welcome.

CAPE OF GOOD-HOPE, *Feb.* 6, 1771.

LET-

LETTER XXII.

Qualities of the AIR and SOIL of the CAPE OF GOOD-HOPE.

PLANTS, INSECTS, and ANIMALS.

THE air of the Cape is very healthy. It is refreſhed by the ſouth-eaſt winds, which are ſo cold, even in the midſt of ſummer, that cloth is worn here all the year round. Its latitude is, notwithſtanding thirty-three degrees ſouth. But I am perſuaded that the ſouth pole is much colder than the north.

THERE are but few diſorders incident to the people of the Cape. The ſcurvy is ſoon cured, altho' there are no ſea turtles. But the ſmall-pox on the other hand, makes moſt dreadful ravages,—many of the inhabitants are deeply ſcarred with it. It is reported to have been introduced here by a ſhip from Denmark. Moſt of the Hotentots who caught it, died. Since which time, they are reduced to a very ſmall number, and they ſeldom come down to the town.

THE ſoil of the Cape is a ſandy gravel, mingled with a white earth. I don't know whether precious minerals are a part of its productions. The

Dutch formerly had gold mines at Lagoa, in the ſtreights of Moſambique, and had alſo a ſettlement there, but were forced to abandon it, on account of the badneſs of the air *.

I HAVE ſeen at the houſe of the Fort-Major, a ſulphureous earth, in which were pieces of wood, reduced to a cinder; alſo true *gypſum*, and black cubes of all ſizes, united as it were by amalgamation, without having loſt their ſhape. Theſe laſt are believed to be iron ore.

I SAW no tree peculiar to the country but the tree of gold, and tree of ſilver, the wood of which is only fit to burn. The former differs from the latter in nothing but the colour of its leaf, which is yellow. There are ſaid to be foreſts of theſe within land; but in this part, the ground is covered with a variety of flowering, and other ſhrubs. This confirms my opinion, that they flouriſh only in a temperate air, their calice being formed to imbibe no more than a moderate heat.

AMONG the plants which ſeemed moſt worthy of notice, excluſive of thoſe already mentioned, are, a red flower, which reſembles a tufted butterfly, with legs, four wings, and a tail. A ſpecies of hyacinth, with a long ſtalk, all the flowers of which are formed at the top, like the buds of the *imperial*: another bulbous flower, growing in the marſhes; it is like a large red tulip, in the center of which is a multitude of ſmall flowers.

A SHRUB, whoſe flower reſembles a large artichoak, of a fleſh colour. Another common ſhrub, of which

* Bad indeed is that air which will drive a Dutchman from a gold mine. T.

the

they make beautiful hedges: It bears cluſters of papillonaceous flowers of a roſe-colour. They are ſucceeded by leguminous grains.

I BROUGHT ſome of them to plant in France, which ſtood the winter in 1771, and vegetated in the King's garden in 1772.

AMONG the inſects I have ſeen here, is a beautiful red graſshopper, ſpeckled with black; ſome very fine butterflies, and another very ſingular inſect;—'tis a little brown ſcarabæus, and runs very faſt; when attempted to be taken, it emits with noiſe a wind, followed by a little ſmoak; if the finger is touched by this vapour, a brown ſtain enſues, which laſts ſome days. He repeats this operation many times ſucceſſively. The inhabitants call it the cannonier.

THE Humming-Bird is not uncommon here. I ſaw one of the ſize of a walnut, of a changeable green colour on the belly. It had a collar of red feathers, which ſhone upon his ſtomach like rubies; its wings were brown, like a ſparrow's, and appeared upon his beautiful plumage like a ſurtout. His beak was black, of a good length, and being curved, was of a proper ſhape to ſeek for honey in the boſom of flowers. It had a long and taper tongue. It lived ſeveral days. I ſaw it eat flies, and drink ſugared water. But as it was attempting to bathe in the cup ſet for that purpoſe, its feathers adhered together, and the ſame night the muſquitos devoured it.

I HAVE ſeen ſome birds of the colour of fire, with a belly and head like black velvet; they become brown in the winter. Some of them change colour thrice a year. There is alſo a bird of Paradiſe, but

not ſo beautiful as thoſe I ſaw in Aſia. I did not ſee one of theſe alive. The *Gard'ner's Friend*, and a kind of *Tarins* are frequently found in gardens. I wiſhed to have taken a *Gard'ner's Friend* to Europe,—it would have been of great ſervice there. I obſerved it to be conſtantly employed in catching caterpillars, and hooking them upon the thorns on the buſhes.

HERE are eagles, and another bird very near of the ſame ſpecies. It is called the *Secretary*, having round its neck a row of long quills, fit for writing with. It has this particularity, that it cannot ſtand upright on its legs, which are long, and covered with ſcales. It lives upon ſerpents only. The length of its claws renders it very capable of ſeizing them, and this ruff of feathers round its neck, protects it from their bites. This bird alſo ought to be naturalized amongſt us. The oſtrich is very common here; they offered me young ones at a crown each. I have eaten of their eggs, which are far inferior to thoſe of pullets. The *Caſoar* is found here, and is covered with coarſe hair inſtead of feathers. There is a prodigious number of ſea birds, of the names and natures of which, I am entirely ignorant. The eggs laid by penguins are thought much of, but I did not think them extraordinary. They have this ſingular quality, that the white being boiled, continues always tranſparent.

THE ſea abounds in fiſh, which I thought better than that of the Iſlands, but inferior to that of Europe. We find on the ſhore ſome ſhells, the paper-nautilus, the meduſa's-head, ſome *lepas*, and very beautiful lithophytes, which when arranged upon paper, repreſent trees, brown, ſaffron, and purple. They are ſold to travellers. I ſaw a fiſh here, of the ſize and ſhape of the blade of a flemiſh knife.

It

It was ſilvered over and marked naturally on each ſide with the impreſſion of two fingers; here are ſea-calves, whales, ſea-cows, cod, and a great variety of other common fiſh, of which I ſhall not ſpeak, my obſervations having been but few, and my knowledge of ichthyology, but ſlight.

THERE is very common here, a ſpecies of mountain turtle, with yellow ſhells, marked with black; they are fit for no uſe whatever. There are porcupines, and marmots, which differ from ours in form; ſtags and deer are in plenty, as alſo wild aſſes, zebras, &c. An Engliſh engineer, ſome years ago killed here a giraffe, or cameleopard, an animal ſixteen feet high, that browzes on the leaves of trees.

THE *bavian*, is a large monkey, made like a bear. The nature of the monkey ſeems to have an analogy with that of every claſs of animals. I remember to have ſeen a ſapajou, which had the head and mane of a lion. That of Madagaſcar, called maki, reſembles a leveret, and the orang-outang is like a man.

EVERY day ſhewed me ſome animals unknown in Europe,—they ſeem to have taken refuge in thoſe parts of the globe leaſt frequented by men, whoſe neighbourhood is always fatal to them. The ſame may be ſaid of the plants, the ſpecies of which are the moſt various, the leſs cultivated the ground. M. de Tolbac informed me, that he had ſent to Monſieur Linnæus of Sweden, ſome plants from the Cape, ſo different from plants known in Europe, that this great Naturaliſt wrote to him: "*You have conferred* "*upon me the greateſt pleaſure; but you have thrown* "*my whole ſyſtem into diſorder.*"

THE

THE horſes of the Cape are good, and the aſſes beautiful. The oxen have a large ſwelling or excreſcence on their necks, formed of fat, and ſome ſmall veſſels interſperſed. At firſt ſight, this excreſcence ſeems monſtrous; but one may ſoon perceive that it is a reſervoir, with which nature, for its ſupport, has furniſhed this animal, deſtined to live in the ſcorching plains of Africa. In the dry ſeaſon, the beaſt grows thin, and the ſwelling diminiſhes; but recovers itſelf, and the wen is recruited with ſupplies when it feeds on green herbs. Other animals under this climate, have the ſame advantages. The camel has a bunch, the dromedary has two, in the form of a ſaddle. The ſheep has a large tail, made en capuchon, or poake, which is but a lump of ſuet, of ſeveral pounds weight.

THEY have taught the oxen here to run almoſt with the carts they are harneſſed to.

BEEF and mutton are ſo plentiful, that the heads and feet are thrown away; which draws the wolves of a night into the very town. I frequently hear them howling in the environs. Pliny obſerves, that the European lions found in Romania, are more active and ſtronger than thoſe of Afric, and the wolves of Africa and Egypt, he adds, are but ſmall, and not very ſtrong. In fact, the wolves of the Cape are much leſs dangerous than ours. I might add, that this ſuperiority extends even to the men of our continent. We have more ſpirit and courage than the Aſiatics and Negroes; but methinks it would be a commendation more worthy of us, could it be ſaid, we ſurpaſſed them in juſtice, benevolence, and the other ſocial virtues.

THE

THE tiger is more dangerous than the wolf; he is cunning as a cat, but wants courage. The dogs attack him fearleſsly.

IT is not the ſame with the lion.—As ſoon as they hear his roar, terror ſeizes them. If they ſee him, they ſtand, but will not approach him. The hunters ſhoot him with guns of a large bore *. I have handled

* Our author not having mentioned the elephant,—which is commonly found and frequently hunted at the Cape,—I will inſert an abſtract from the Abbé de la Caille, which I hope will be pleaſing to the reader.——"The hunters always ſeek for the elephant in the neighbourhood of rivers—and attack him in the following manner: Three cavaliers well mounted go out together—two of them remain at a proper diſtance in the plain, and the third waits the coming of the beaſt to quench his thirſt at the river,—of which the third cavalier gives notice by a ſignal to his companions,—and then pierces him with a ſtroke of a launce, while drinking.——The animal, enraged at the wound, purſues the cavalier, who retires to the plain. One of his companions haſtens to his aid, and attacking the elephant, wounds him a ſecond time. The beaſt forgetting his firſt aſſailant, purſues the laſt.—The third cavalier then advances, and wounds him alſo.—— The creature now diſregards the ſecond, in like manner as he did the firſt—and follows the third, upon whom he ſeems deſirous of wreaking his fury ——In the mean time he loſes blood very faſt, and not the leſs for the violence of his rage,—and he ſometimes dies exhauſted before his firſt enemy returns to the charge—this, however, is not uſually the caſe, and he is then again attacked by the firſt man, and ſo on by the ſecond and third—till he expires."——I have here deſcribed the chaſe only of the elephant—The inhabitants have many ways of taking him alive,—ſometimes by a female put in a park, fenced in for the purpoſe, and ſometimes in toils, of which ther are various kinds.

The Abbé then relates a tragical event which happened while he was at the Cape:——"Three brothers, who had been long uſed to this exerciſe, were about to return to Holland, but determined to add one more to their many triumphs.—The firſt brother pierced the beaſt and eſcaped;—the ſecond wounded him, but in flying, his horſes fore-feet ſunk into a mole-hill—and could not recover before the elephant came up.——The furious beaſt

handled one of them, but few, except peaſants of the country can uſe them.

LIONS are not found within ſixty leagues of the Cape; this animal inhabits the foreſts within land; his roaring, at a diſtance, ſounds like the grumbling of diſtant thunder. He ſeldom attacks man,—he neither ſeeks, nor avoids him; but if wounded by a hunter, he will ſelect that man among all the reſt, and ſpring upon him with an implacable fury. The Company allow privileges and rewards for the encouragement of lion hunting.

I WAS told the following circumſtance by the Governor, M. Berg, the Fort-major, and the principal inhabitants, who vouched the truth of it:

AT about ſixty leagues from the Cape, in the uncultivated lands, there is found a prodigious quantity of ſmall CABRIS, *(goats)*. I ſaw ſome of them in the Company's menageries; they have two ſmall horns on their heads; their hair is fallow coloured ſpotted with white. Theſe creatures feed in ſuch vaſt numbers, that thoſe who go firſt in the route they take, devour all the paſture, and become very fat, inſomuch that their followers, finding no food, grow

beaſt ſeized the cavalier with his trunk, tore him from his horſe, and whirled him upon the ground,—he then took up the horſe alſo with his trunk, and threw him ſeveral yards into the air,——this done, he returned to the poor man, who lay unable to riſe from the earth, and having again ſeized him, caſt him with all his might into the air and held out his teeth to catch him as he came down—the unhappy wretch falling from a prodigious height, upon one of the teeth, it pierced him through the body and he lay there impaled. The ſavage beaſt perſiſted in holding him for ſome time in this condition, and ſeemed to exult over him, by advancing him towards his companions, who though they ſaw his diſtreſs, and heard the agonizing cries he uttered, were unable to aſſiſt him. &c.

very

very lean. Thus they continue their march in vaſt herds, until ſtopped by ſome chain of mountains; they then turn back, and thoſe in the rear, finding in their turn freſh herbage, recover their good plight, while thoſe who were leaders before, loſe their fleſh, and become lean. Attempts have been made to form them into herds, but they cannot be tamed ſufficiently for that purpoſe. Theſe innumerable armies are conſtantly followed by troops of lions and tigers, as if nature in creating the former, had decreed a certain ſubſiſtance to the latter. It is ſcarcely to be doubted, from what was declared to me by the above men, that there are lions innumerable in the interior parts of Africa: the account of the Hollanders tallies with hiſtory in this reſpect. Polybius ſays, that being in Africa with Scipio, he ſaw ſeveral lions placed on croſſes, to deter others from approaching the villages. Pompey, according to Pliny, did at one time turn ſix hundred lions into the amphitheatre, among which there were three hundred and fifteen males. There ſeems to be a phyſical cauſe in the natural ſyſtem for Africa's being the practical reſidence of the brute creation. It is to be preſumed, that want of water has prevented the increaſe of the human ſpecies, and their forming themſelves into great nations here, as they have done in Aſia. Vaſt in extent as this coaſt is, the rivers are but few, and theſe ſmall. The animals of Africa can feed a long time without water. I have obſerved on board of ſhips, that the African ſheep drink but once a week, altho' their provender is dried herbs.

THE Dutch have eſtabliſhments for 300 leagues along the coaſt, and for 150 upon the ſtraits of Moſambique; they have ſcarce any at above 50 leagues within land. It is pretended that this colony can put under arms four or five thouſand white men, but it would

would be difficult to get them together. Their numbers would be very ſoon increaſed, if the free exerciſe of religion were permitted. Holland perhaps, upon its own account, fears the aggrandizing of this colony, preferable in every reſpect to the mother country. The air is pure and temperate; all manner of proviſions abound; a quintal of corn coſts there no more than one hundred ſous, ten pounds of mutton and twelve ſous. A legre of wine, containing two hogſheads and a half, for one hundred and fifty livres *. They exact conſiderable duties upon theſe articles when ſold to ſtrangers; but an inhabitant buys at a much cheaper rate.

OTHER articles of the trade of this country, are the ſkins of ſheep, oxen, ſea-calves, and tigers; aloes, ſalt proviſions, butter, dry fruits, and all ſorts of eatables ‡. They have tried in vain to grow coffee and ſugar, the vegetables of Aſia will not thrive here. The cheſnut-tree grows very faſt, but being very ſoft, is not fit for buildings. Firs do not thrive.

* About Six Pounds Ten Shillings ſterling.

‡ In 1771, the Dutch Eaſt-India ſhips homeward bound, being at the Cape and not freigted, took on board in bulk, ſome corn, (the produce of the country) and brought it to Holland. The wheat is a beautiful berry, thin ſkinned, white, quite dry, and clean, and in weight exceeds the beſt Engliſh or Zealand, as 140 to 132.—— The rye is ſuperior to any of Northern growth.—— My information of its proportional weight, is not ſo accurate, as that of the wheat; but it was ſold at ten or twelve per cent. above the beſt rye of Pruſſia.——The barley is thin, and much inferior to our Norfolk.——'Tis more like the Zealand barley —— The Dutch incline to cultivate this new branch of trade, which promiſes much benefit —They ſell it in ſmall lots at public auction. In 1774, the wheat ſold at two hundred and thirty guilders, which is about ſixty-four ſhillings a quarter, Wincheſter ——— The heat of the climate at the Cape ſo effectually dries the grain, that it may be brought in bulk, though the voyage is ſo long a one, without apprehenſion of danger from its effervеſcing. T.

The

The pine riſes to a moderate height. This country might from its ſituation, have been the mart for the commerce of Aſia; but the north of Europe monopolizes all maritime affairs. The harbour is by no means ſafe, and the entrance of it always dangerous. I have ſeen at this ſeaſon, which is the fineſt of the year, many veſſels forced to hoiſt ſail and go to ſea. After all, the people ſhould be thankful to Providence, for having given them every requiſite, to ſupply the real wants of Europeans, without having added thoſe things that ſerve only to gratify their paſſions.

Cape of Good-Hope, Feb. 10, 1771.

LET-

LETTER XXIII.

SLAVES, HOTTENTOTS, HOLLANDERS.

THE plenty of this country diffuſes itſelf even amongthe ſlaves. They have bread and greens at diſcretion. A ſheep is allowed weekly for two negroes. They do not work on Sundays. They lay upon beds with matraſſes and coverlids. Both men and women are clad with warm clothes. I ſpeak on this ſubject from experience, having been told by ſeveral blacks that their French maſters had ſold them to the Dutch by way of puniſhing them, but, that in fact, they had thereby done them a ſervice. A ſlave coſts as much again here as in the Iſle of France. Man is therefore doubly valuable in this place. The ſituation of theſe negroes would be preferable to that of the peaſants of Europe, if there were any compenſation for the loſs of liberty.

THE good treatment they meet with, has a great influence upon their behaviour; their zeal, activity, and fidelity, are amazingly great. Yet theſe are the very ſame iſlanders of Madagaſcar, who are ſo inattentive to their maſter when in our colonies.

THE Dutch bring ſlaves from Batavia alſo. They are Malays a nation of Aſia, very populous; but little known in Europe. Their language and cuſtoms are peculiar to themſelves. They are more ugly than

than negroes, and reſemble them in feature. Their ſtature is lower, their colour *d'ur noín cendré*, * their hair long, but thin. Theſe Malays are ſubject to the moſt violent paſſions.

THE Hottentots are the natural inhabitants of the place, they are free—They are not robbers—they do not ſell their children, nor do they attempt to enſlave each other. Among them adultery is puniſhed with death—the culprit is ſtoned. Some of them let themſelves as houſhold ſervants for a piaſtre a year, and ſerve the inhabitants with ſo much affection as to hazard their lives for them. They are conſtantly armed with a demi-lance or dart.

THE government at the Cape ſeem to make a point of protecting the Hottentots. When they lodge a complaint againſt an European, they are favourably heard: it being preſumed that the party known to have the feweſt deſires and feweſt wants is the moſt likely to be in the right.

I have ſeen many of them come into the town, driving waggons drawn by eight pairs of oxen. They have whips of a great length which they uſe with both hands. The driver, from his ſeat, flogs with equal addreſs the fore or wheel horſes.

THE Hottentots are a paſtoral people, and are all upon a footing; but in each village, they chuſe from

* I do not know how to tranſlate theſe words, unleſs by thoſe made uſe of by a young Midſhipman, who was caſt away with Captain Barton in the Litchfield during the laſt war. In deſcribing the complexion of the Emperor of Morocco; the young ſailor obſerves, that they do his Imperial Majeſty's complexion manifeſt injuſtice, who ſay that he is a negroe, for that he is only of a dark cheſnut complexion. *T.*

among themſelves, two men to whom they give the title of Captain or Corporal, theſe manage their commercial buſineſs with the company. They ſell their flocks very cheap,—ſo cheap even, as three or four ſheep for a roll of tobacco. Although they have ſuch numbers of cattle, they generally wait till they die by accident or old age before they eat them.

THOSE whom I ſaw had a ſheep-ſkin over their ſhoulders, with a cap and belt of the ſame ſtuff. They ſhewed me how they lay to reſt, which was naked at their length upon the ground, and their cloak ſerving to cover them.

THEY are not ſo black as the negroes—like them however they have a flat noſe, wide mouth and thick lips. Their hair is ſhorter and more curly, like wool*. I have obſerved a ſomething very particular in their ſpeech,—every word is preceded by a clack of the tongue, the reaſon without doubt of their being called the Choccoquas; which name they have in ſome old maps by Monſieur de L'Iſle. One would really think they continually repeated choccoq.

As to the apron of the Hottentot women, 'tis a ſtory which every body affirmed to be falſe; 'tis drawn from Kolben's voyage, which is full of ſuch ridiculous fables.

* Many different accounts are given of the ſtature of the Hottentots—Our author is ſilent on this ſubject—The A. de la Caille ſays he meaſured one, who was 6 feet 7 inches $\frac{3}{4}$ high, and corpulent in proportion—this man came into the town with many others, and does not appear to have been ſelected for his extraordinary ſtature—we may therefore ſuppoſe theſe people to be in general larger than Europeans. Had he been remarkable for his ſize, the Abbè would doubtleſs have ſpoken of him accordingly. *T.*—*The French foot is to that of England as* 1000 *to* 1068.

Pliny's

Pliny's remark is more to be depended on, that animals are leſs ſagacious, in proportion as their blood is thicker. The ſtrongeſt animals by his account have the thickeſt blood, and the more cunning the thinneſt. I have myſelf remarked that on bleeding a Negroe, his blood curdled very quickly. To this cauſe I ſhould readily attribute the ſuperiority of white people over the blacks.

BESIDES their ſlaves, and the Hottentots, the Dutch retain indented ſervants. They are Europeans, to whom the Company advance money, and whom the inhabitants take home with them, having firſt paid the government their diſburſements.

They are chiefly employd to ſuperintend houſhold matters. They are diligent enough at firſt, but good living makes them idle.

The people at the Cape do not game, nor do they viſit much. The women look after their ſervants and houſes, the furniture of which is always in the niceſt order. The huſband manages the buſineſs abroad. In the evening the family aſſembles, they walk, and take the air as ſoon as the breeze is at an end. The ſame buſineſs and the ſame pleaſures are repeated each day.

THE utmoſt harmony prevails among relations. My hoſteſs's brother was a Peaſant of the Cape who came ſeventy leagues from hence. This man hardly ever ſpoke, and was continually ſitting and ſmoaking his pipe. He had a little boy with him of ten years old who conſtantly ſtood by him. The father put his hand to his cheek and careſſed him without opening his lips; the child, as ſilent as the father preſſed his great hands in his own, looking up to him with

eyes expreſſive of the moſt filial tenderneſs. This little boy wore the country habit,—he had a couſin in the houſe of his own age who was very genteely dreſſed; theſe children uſed to walk out together with the greateſt intimacy. The little citizen did not look with contempt upon the Peaſant,—he was his couſin.

Madamoiſelle Berg, though but ſixteen years old, manages without aſſiſtance a very reſpectable family. She receives ſtrangers,—attends to the ſervants,—and maintains the moſt perfect order in the houſe, and with a countenance always at eaſe. Her youth,—her beauty—her accompliſhments, and character gain her the eſteem of every body: yet I never obſerved her pay any regard to the compliments addreſſed to her. I told her one day, ſhe had a great many friends; "I have one great one," ſaid ſhe,—that is my *father*.

It was this magiſtrates delight when he came home from buſineſs to ſeat himſelf among his children. They jumped round his neck,—the little ones embraced his knees; they appealed to him in their little diſputes—while the eldeſt daughter, excuſing ſome—approving others—and ſmiling upon all, redoubled the joy of the truly parental heart of her father. Methought I ſaw the Antiope of Idomeneus.

THIS people, content with domeſtic happineſs, the ſure conſequence of a virtuous life, do not yet ſeek after it, in romances, or upon the theatre. There are no public exhibitions at the Cape, nor are they wiſhed for. In his own houſe each man views the moſt pleaſing—the moſt affecting of all ſpectacles, ſervants, happy:—children, well brought up:—and wives, faithful and affectionate. Theſe are the delights which the tales of fiction cannot afford. They

are

are a penſive ſet of people, who chuſe rather to feel —than to converſe, or to argue. Perhaps the want of ſubject, is the cauſe of their taciturnity. But of what conſequence is the mind's being vacant, ſo the heart be full, and actuated by the tender emotions of nature, unexcited by artifice, or unconſtrained by unreaſonable decorum and unnatural reſerve.

As ſoon as the girls of the Cape are in love, they avow it ingenuouſly. They call it a natural ſentiment, a gentle paſſion, upon which depends the felicity of their lives, and compenſates the pains and danger of their becoming mothers; but they themſelves—will themſelves make choice of the man to whom they make their vows of conſtancy.

THEY make no myſtery of their paſſion;—as they feel it—ſo they expreſs it. Are you beloved? You are accepted, entertained, and publickly diſtinguiſhed. I was a witneſs to a parting ſcene between Mademoiſelle Nedling and her lover. In tears, and with ſighs ſhe prepared the preſents which were to be the pledges of her affection—in which employment ſhe neither ſought for witneſſes, not did ſhe ſhun them.

THIS mutual inclination is generally productive of a happy marriage. The young men are equally frank in their proceedings. They return from Europe to fulfil their engagements; and bring with them the merit of the dangers through which they have paſſed, and of a love unaltered by an abſence from its object. Eſteem and affection are united, and maintain or life that deſire of pleaſing which elſewhere ſhews itſelf more towards other objects, than towards that to which it is properly due.

As happily as they live here, bleſſed with ſimplicity of manners, and a country ſo rich and plentiful—yet, every thing which comes from Holland is received among them with tranſport. Their houſes are papered with views of Amſterdam, of its public places, and environs. They look upon Holland as their country, and even ſtrangers in their ſervice ſpeak of it in that light only. I aſked a Swede in the company's ſervice, how long the fleet would be on its rerurn to Holland—"we ſhall be at leaſt three months, replied he, before we get home."

THEY have a handſome church, wherein divine ſervice is performed with great decency. I don't know whether the Dutch think religion an addition to their happineſs, but there are men here whoſe anceſtors have ſacrificed every thing that they held moſt dear to the exerciſe of it. I ſpeak of the French Refugees, At ſome leagues diſtance from the Cape they have a ſettlement, which is called La Petite Rochelle. They are quite in raptures at the ſight of a Frenchman, they bring him home to their houſes, and preſent him to their wives and children, as a man, happy, in having ſeen the country of their forefathers, and in a proſpect of returning to it again. France is continually the ſubject of diſcourſe, they admire it, they praiſe it; yet do they complain of it, as of a mother whoſe ſeverity towards them had been too extreme. Thus do they break in upon their enjoyment of the country they now live in—by lamenting their exile from that which they have never ſeen.

THE Magiſtrates of the Cape eſpecially the Governor are treated with the utmoſt deference. His houſe is diſtinguiſhed only from others, by the ſentinel at the door, and by the cuſtom of ſounding a trumpet when he ſits down to dinner. This piece of

reſpect

reſpect is annexed to his place. No other pomp attends his perſon. He goes out without retinue, and is eaſy of acceſs. His houſe ſtands by the ſide of a canal ſhaded with cheſnut trees planted before his door. In it, are the pictures of Ruyter, Van Trump, and ſome other illuſtrious perſons of Holland. It is ſmall and plain, and ſuited to the very few people who have affairs to ſolicit with him; but the governor himſelf is ſo reſpected and beloved, that the inhabitants do not even paſs his door without ſhewing ſome mark or other of their reſpect.

HE gives no public entertainments, but his purſe is always open for the ſervice of worthy and indigent people. They need pay no court to him. If they ſeek for juſtice, they obtain it of the council;—if ſuccour, this he takes upon himſelf, as a duty,—injuſtice only can be ſolicited, but it conſtantly meets with the merited ſucceſs.

HE has much time upon his hands, which he employs for the preſervation of peace and concord, being perſuaded of their tendency to the well being of all ſocieties. He is not of opinion that the power of the chief magiſtrate depends upon diſcord, and diſſenſion among individuals. I have heard him ſay that the beſt policy was to deal juſtly and honeſtly with every man. He frequently invites ſtrangers to his table. Although more than eighty years old his converſation is lively; he is acquainted with moſt of our works of genius, and is fond of them. Of all the Frenchmen he has ſeen, he chiefly regrets the Abbè de la Caille, for whom he built an Obſervatory here. He eſteemed him for his learning, his modeſty, his diſintereſtedneſs, and ſocial qualities. I know nothing more of this learned man than by his works;

but in mentioning the reſpect paid by ſtrangers to his memory, I feel a ſatisfaction at finiſhing my account of this eſtimable body of people with their eulogium of one of my countrymen*.

LETTER XXII.

CONTINUATION of my JOURNAL to the CAPE.

I WAS invited by Monſieur Serrurier, firſt miniſter of the church to go to ſee the library. The building is handſome and fit for the purpoſe. I could not help remarking a number of books of theology, which have never yet occaſioned any controverſies, and indeed the Dutch never look in them. At the end of the company's garden, there is a menagerie containing a great number of birds. The pelicans that I ſaw upon the beach on my arrival had been boarders in this place; but they were driven away becauſe they eat the young ducks. In the day time they went into the road to ſeek for fiſh, and at night returned to rooſt on ſhore.

* The late Dr. Goldſmith frequently ſpoke of this chapter, as a maſter-piece of good ſenſe, and well directed attention and ſenſibility. *T.*

ON

ON the 10th of February a ſignal was made that a French ſhip appeared: 'twas the *Alliance*, that had been forced from Bourbon by the hurricane. She had loſt her mizen maſt in the ſtorm. She could give us no tidings of the Indienne. Having taken in proviſions, ſhe continued her voyage to America without repairing the loſs of her maſt. The Dutch have a number of them in ſtore, which they keep buried in the ſand: but they ſell them very dear. A new mizen maſt for the *Normande* coſt 1000 crowns.

ON the 11th the *Digue*, a pink of the King's that left the Iſle of France a month before, came into the Cape to get proviſions. I knew the captain, Monſieur le Fer. He told me he ſhould anchor here for a few days only, and then ſteer for the weſtward. Deſpairing to ſee the *Indienne* and my effects any more, and thinking this opportunity a favourable one, I reſolved to embrace it.

I acquainted Monſieur Berg, and Monſieur Tolbac, with my determination; both of them again offered me their purſes. Supping one evening at the governor's and talking of Conſtance wine, Monſieur de Tolbac aſked me if I would not carry ſome of it with me to Europe. I very naturally anſwered that the diſorder in my finances by the accident that had happened, prevented my making a little purchaſe of it, which I meant to have done, as a Preſent for a lady to whom I had a particular attachmen. He told me he would relieve me from this embarraſſment by giving me if I thought proper an alverame of red or of white wine, or of both. I anſwered him that one would ſuffice, and that I would preſent it in his name to the perſon for whom I intended it. "*No, ſaid he, 'tis to you I give it, as a remembrance of me, and all the acknomledgement I aſk, is, that you will write*

write to me when you get to France." He ſent me the wine next morning. Monſieur Berg to whom I had frequently mentioned the civilities I had received from Monſieur and Mademoiſelle Cremon, told me, he would take upon himſelf the making my acknowledgements to them, and that he would ſend them as from me two dozen of Conſtance wine.

IN a ſituation, where I was in abſolute want of every thing, I was not a little happy at meeting among ſtrangers, with men of ſo obliging and benevolent a diſpoſition.

I agreed with the captain of the *Digue*, to pay him 600 livres for my paſſage to France. He was to ſail in a few days. I was very cautious of uſing Monſieur de Berg's credit. I made up one ſingle ſuit of clothes only and a little linen. This was the whole equipage of an officer returning from the Eaſt-Indies. I had not only loſt all my effects, but found myſelf 140 livres in debt.

I had but juſt ſettled my affairs here, when the *African* came to an anchor at the Cape; ſhe came to take in proviſions; ſhe left the Iſle of France about the middle of January, and brought the following account of the *Indienne*.

THIS unfortunate veſſel had loſt all her maſts in the ſtorm; and after having kept the ſea for more than a month returned at length to the Iſle of France in ſo bad a condition, that ſhe had been ſince diſarmed. The ſeas ſhe ſhipp'd had ſpoilt part of her cargo, and had filled the powder room with water, inſomuch that the trunks of the paſſengers were afloat. Monſieur Moncherat, a good man I knew there, had looked over

over my luggage, and wrote me word, that but little damage had been done to any thing, except to the things in my cabbin.

THEY told us of an odd accident that happened on board the *Indienne*. Among the tranſports who were ſent to the Iſle of France, there was one of a good family, named ***. He had aſſaſſinated his brother-in-law in France. On the voyage he quarrelled with the ſupercargo, and when they landed, he ſtabbed him without ceremony, and broke the bladé of his ſword in his body. He fled to the woods, but was found, and committed to priſon. He was tried and condemned, but while under ſentence of death, there was a hole made in the wall of his priſon, through which he eſcaped.

THIS event happened two months before my departure.

DURING the tempeſt the Indienne was expoſed to, the mizen maſt was carried away, and fell into the ſea. While they were haſtily cutting away the rigging, they ſaw in the middle of the waves, a ſailor hanging by the round of the floationg maſt. He cried out, ſave me, ſave me, I am ***. It was really this unhappy wretch. At the return of the *Indienne* to the Iſle of France, they ſuffered him once more to eſcape. When Monſieur de Tolbac heard this anecdote, he only ſaid, *He that's born to be hanged will never be drowned.*

THEY had heard nothing of the *Alliance*, which probably was loſt.

IT was very fortunate for me, to receive my effects on the eve of my departure, and to be no longer on board

board the *Indienne*, which was likely to be detained ſome time at the Iſle of France.

THE *Digue* did not ſail till the ſecond of March. I paid all my expences with bills of exchange upon the Treaſurer for the Colonies, at ſix months, by which I loſt twenty-two per cent. diſcount.

I TOOK leave of the Governor, and of Monſieur Berg, who gave me ſeveral natural curioſities. I had preſented him with ſome of mine. Mademoiſelle Berg, gave me three perroquets from Madagaſcar; they had grey heads, and were of the ſize of ſparrows. My landlady furniſhed me with fruits, and weeping, wiſhed me, as did her family, a good voyage.

IT was with concern that I left theſe good people, and their gardens of European fruit-trees, which, though in the month of march, were loaded with fruit. I rejoiced in the thoughts, however, of finding them in bloſſom in Europe, and of enjoying in one year two ſummers and no winter: but what far exceeded the delights of a beautiful country and mild ſeaſon, I was about to reviſit my native country, and the friends I left in it.

LET-

LETTER XXV.

DEPARTURE FROM THE CAPE.

DESCRIPTION of the ISLAND of ASCENSION.

THE 2d of March at two in the afternoon, we ſet ſail in company with ſix of the fleet from Batavia. The other ſix went fifteen days before. We went out by the ſecond opening of the bay, leaving Roben's Iſland on the left. We ſoon outſailed the Dutch ſhips. They kept company to the latitude of the *Azores*, where two ſhips of war waited, to convoy them to Holland.

MARINERS reckon the Cape to be a third part of the way from the Iſle of France to Europe: another third they call, to the line: and the laſt, from thence home.

EIGHT days after our departure, while we were ſitting upon deck after dinner, in the moſt perfect ſecurity, we ſaw a great flame iſſue from the kitchen-chimney, which roſe ſeveral yards above deck. Every body ran forward. It was no more than a panic: an awkward cook had thrown ſome fat upon the hearth. It was mentioned by ſome of the officers upon this ſubject, that a few years ago, in a ſhip

ſhip called the ——, the fire had catched the maſt, and that all the rigging forward being on fire, the officers and crew were in diſtraction, and came in a tumult to tell the Captain, who coming out of the cabbin, ſaid very coolly, " My good friends, this is " nothing, only bear away, and put before the " wind."

IN fact, the flames driven by the wind, ceaſed when all the ſails were burnt. The man thus endowed with ſang-froid, was Monſieur de Surville, an officer of great merit in the Company's ſervice.

WE had the wind S. W. conſtantly, and a fine ſea, till we got to the Iſland of Aſcenſion. The 20th of March we were near its latitude, (8 deg. S.) but we had taken it too much Eaſtward. We were obliged to run down the longitude, our intention being to anchor there, and catch ſome turtle.

THE 22d in the morning we had ſight of it.— This iſland is ſeen ten leagues off, although ſcarce a league and half over. One can diſtinguiſh a pointed hill, called the Green-Mountain. The reſt of the iſland is formed of ſmall black and red hills, and the pieces of rocks near the ſea were quite white with the dung of birds.

THE nearer you approach, the more horrid the landſcape appears. We coaſted along ſhore, in order to anchor in the North-weſt. At the foot of theſe black hills, we perceived an appearance like the ruins of an immenſe city. They were ſunken rocks, which have proceeded from an ancient volcano; they are ſcattered all over the plain, and as far as the ſea, in ſtrange ſhapes. The ſhore hereabouts is compoſed of them. Some are formed like pyramids,

pyramids, others like grottos, half finiſhed arches, the waves break againſt which; one while they flow over them, and in running down again, cover them with a kind of table-cloth of foam; ſometimes finding flat pieces raiſed high, and full of holes, they beat againſt them underneath, and throw up long jets deau of various forms.

THESE black and white ſhores were almoſt covered with ſea-fowl. A number of frigate-birds hovered about our rigging, where they were taken by the ſeamen. We anchored in the evening at the entrance of the Great-Bay, I went into the boat with the men who were to catch turtle. The landing-place is at the foot of a maſs of rocks, which is ſeen from the anchorage at the extremity of the bay on the right-ſide. We got out upon a large ſand, which is white, mixed with grains of red, green, and other colours, like that kind of aniſeed called *mignonette*. Some paces from hence we found a little grotto, and in it a bottle, in which the ſhips who touch there put letters. They break the bottle, and having read the letters, put them into another.

WE went forward about fifty paces, taking to the left, behind the rock, to a little plain, where the ground broke to pieces under our feet, as if it had been a covering of ſnow. I taſted ſome of it; it was ſalt, which I thought very ſtrange, there being no appearance of the ſea's coming ſo far.

THEY brought up wood, the kettle, and the ſail of the boat, upon which our men lay down in expectation of night. 'Tis about eight in the evening only that the turtles come on ſhore. The people were laying here at their eaſe, when one of them jumping up; called out in a great fright, *a dead man, here's a dead*

a dead man.—The matter was, by a little croſs, placed on a ſmall hill of ſand, we perceived that ſome perſon had been buried there. The man had lain down upon this place without thinking; but not one of them would ſtay here a moment after this diſcovery; and we were obliged to comply with their whim, and remove about a hundred yards farther.

THE moon riſing, began to diffuſe a light over this ſolitude, which, unlike agreeable views, that are rendered more ſtriking by the light of the moon, appeared but the more horrible, and diſmal. We were at the foot of the black-hill, at the top of which we could ſee a large croſs, put up, as we ſuppoſed by ſome ſailors who had been there. Before us, the plain was covered with rocks, from which roſe an infinite number of points about the height of a man.

THE moon cauſed a ſparkling on the top of theſe points which were whitened by the dung of the birds that had reſted there. Theſe white heads upon black bodies, the one of which were upright, the other ſloping, appeared like ghoſts wandering over the tombs. The moſt profound ſilence reigned in this diſmal region; a ſilence, now and then only interrupted and rendered more horrid, by the roaring of the ſea on the beach, or the cry of a ſtray frigate-bird frighted at the ſight of men.

WE were at the edge of the bay waiting for turtles. We lay upon our bellies as ſtill as poſſible, this animal flying at the leaſt noiſe. At laſt we ſaw three come out of the water; they appeared like black clouds, creeping along the ſand. We ran to the firſt, but our impatience occaſioned our loſing it. She went down the cliff again, and ſwam away. The ſecond was advanced farther, and could not eſcape

not eſcape, but was thrown upon its back. In the courſe of the night, and in the ſame valley, we turned above fifty, ſome of which weighed above 5 cwt.

THE ſhore was dug in holes, where they had lain ſo many even as three hundred eggs, and had covered them with ſand, in which they were to be hatched by the ſun.

THE ſailors killed a turtle and made ſoup of it; after which, I laid me down in the grotto, where the letters are depoſited, that I might enjoy the ſhelter of the rock, the diſtant noiſe of the ſea, and the ſoftneſs of the ſand. I ordered a ſailor to fetch me my wrapping-gown; but he dared not go by himſelf paſt the place, where the man had been buried. No beings, certainly, can be at once ſo intrepid, and ſo daſtardly ſuperſtitious as ſeamen are.

I ſlept very comfortably. On awaking, I found a ſcorpion and ſome crabs at the entrance of my cave. I ſaw no other herbs here, than a ſpecies of milk-thiſtle, or celandine. Its juice was milky, and very bitter. The herbage, and the animals were worthy of the country they were in.

I WENT up the ſide of one of the hills, the earth of which reſounded under my feet. It was a perfect cinder, of a reddiſh colour, and ſalt. From hence, perhaps, proceeds the little covering of ſalt upon the ſhore, where we ſpent the night. A booby came and pitched on the ground a little way from me. I preſented the end of my cane to him, and he took it in his bill, without attempting to fly away.

THESE birds will ſuffer a man to take them up in his hand, as will every other ſpecies unuſed to the ſociety of mankind; a proof, this, that there is a ſort of good-will and confidence, natural to all animals towards thoſe creatures, which they do not think miſchievous *. Birds have no fear of oxen.

OUR ſailors killed a number of frigate-birds, for the ſake of a piece of fat that is round their necks. They think it ſpecific in the gout, becauſe this bird is ſo ſwift: but nature, which has annexed this evil to our intemperance, has not placed the remedy for it in our cruelty.

ABOUT ten in the morning, the ſhallop came to fetch the turtles on board. As the ſurf ran high, ſhe anchored at a diſtance, and drew them on board with a rope.

THIS buſineſs employed us all day. In the evening, the turtles that were not worth taking, were thrown into the ſea again. When they have been long on their backs, their eyes grow red as a cherry, and ſtand out of their head. There were many on the ſhore that had been left by other ſhips, to die in this ſituation,—a negligence that was unpardonable.

* Poſſibly a good argument might be deduced from this circumſtance, in refutation of the opinion of Hobbes, that if in a ſuppoſed ſtate of nature, an human being, ſhould accidentally meet for the firſt time, another of the ſpecies, they would mutually run away. *T.*

LETTER XXVI.

CONJECTURES upon the Antiquity of the ISLE of ASCENSION, the ISLE of FRANCE, the CAPE of GOOD-HOPE, and of EUROPE.

WHILE our ſailors were getting the turtles on board, I ſat me down in a chaſm or cavern of the rocks, with which the country is covered: a variety of reflections ſuggeſted themſelves to my imagination at the ſight of ſo horrible a diſorder.

IF theſe, thought I, were the ruins of a great city, what memoirs ſhould we have had of thoſe, by whom it was built, and by whom it was deſtroyed? In Europe there is not a ſingle column.

WHEREFORE do we, ſo well informed in other matters, remain in total ignorance of whence we came, and where we are? All the learned are agreed as to the origin and the duration of Babylon, now deſolate and uninhabited; but by no means concur in opinion concerning the nature and antiquity of the globe, the country of all mankind. Some maintain it to have been produced by fire, and others, by water; theſe, by the laws of motion; and others by thoſe of chryſtallization. The people of the weſtern world believe it to be ſix thouſand years old only,—while thoſe of the Eaſt ſay that it is from all eternity.

IT is probable that one ſyſtem only would be adopted, if all the world were like this iſland. Theſe pumice-ſtones, theſe hillocks of cinders, and theſe broken rocks, which have bubbled up a kind of metallic droſs, evidently prove it to have been the work of a volcano;—but how many years have elapſed ſince the eruption to which it owes its origin?

METHINKS, if this had happened a very long time ago, theſe hills of aſhes would have loſt their pyramidical form, and have been rendered flat by the heavy rains, and the heat of the ſun. The angles and out-lines of the rocks would not be ſo ſharp and pointed,—it being one property of the atmoſphere to deſtroy the projecting parts of every Body; ſtatues of marble carved by the artiſts of ancient Greece, by being expoſed to the air for a ſeries of years, no longer retain their original form; but are again reduced to mere ſhapeleſs blocks.

MIGHT not then a judgment be formed of the antiquity of a Body by the degree of decay it has ſuffered, in like manner as the antiquity of a medal is determined by its ruſt? Is not an old rock as much a medal of earth, engraved by time?

MOREOVER, were this iſland very ancient indeed, theſe blocks of ſtone upon the ſurface of the ground, would have e'er now been buried in it, from their own exceſſive weight; this effect of a heavy body, though ſlow, is yet ſure. The piles of ſhot, and the cannon, ranged upon the floor of an arſenal, in the courſe of a few years bury themſelves therein. The greater part of the monuments of Greece and Italy, have ſunk deeper than their ſurbaſes—and ſome have entirely diſappeared.

IF

IF then I could know *in how long a time a Body of a known form and weight, would be in burying itſelf in a ſoil of a certain known reſiſtance*, I ſhould have an hypotheſis, whereby I might diſcover what I am in ſearch of. The calculation would be eaſy, were the data once known: in the mean time there is great reaſon to believe this iſland but of a modern date.

I AM partly of the ſame opinion, with reſpect to the antiquity of the Iſle of France; but as its piqued mountains are already tabulated on the tops, its rocks a third or fourth part only ſunk in the earth,—and their angles but a little blunted, I am rather induced to believe it ſome ages more ancient than the other.

THE Cape of Good-Hope appears to be of far greater antiquity. The rocks broken from the tops of the mountains are entirely buried in the earth, where they are found by digging. The foot of each mountain has a large and high Talus, formed of the broken pieces of the upper parts. Theſe have been ſeparated from their original ſituation by the continued action of the atmoſphere upon them; in confirmation of this conjecture, they are in far the greateſt quantity in thoſe parts where the winds are uſed to blow. I particularly noticed this at the table-mountain, the part of which, oppoſite to the ſouth-eaſt wind, has a much more extenſive Talus, than that part next the town.

I HAVE alſo remarked upon the table-mountain, ſome ſtones ſtanding by themſelves, the ſize of a tun or large caſk, the angles of which, are blunted. The pieces broken off from them have now no longer the ſharp edges they ſeem formerly to have had; and are of no harder conſiſtence than a white and ſmoothly poliſhed gravel, like almonds. Theſe ſtones are

very hard, and in colour and grain, like plates of China, that have been much uſed.

THE decay of theſe bodies are evidences of their great antiquity. In many places the rock is quite bare, nor is the bed of vegetable earth above two inches deep any where. It cannot then have been many ages ſince vegetables firſt grew there, although they are now common.

WE cannot, however, form any judgment from hence, becauſe the ſummit of the mountain being neither of ſand nor of porous ſtone, but of a ſort of flint, white, poliſhed, and very hard; the ſeeds of plants brought hither by the winds, may have remained a long time before they could be able to germinate.

THE vegetative bed is much deeper on the plains, but from hence neither, can we decide as to the antiquity of the ſoil,—for where this bed is of a conſiderable depth, it may have been increaſed by the floods from the mountains after hard rains, or have been driven or waſhed farther off, in parts where it is thin.

IF there were in Europe an high mountain ſtanding by itſelf, with a flat ſummit as that of the Table, and not covered as that is, with a matter unfit for vegetation, a compariſon might be made between the thickneſs of its vegetative bed, and that of any newly formed land alike inſulated, for example, with the cruſt of earth which covers ſome of thoſe iſlands formed in the courſe of the laſt century at the mouth of the Loire.

'Till

'Till the contrary is proved by experiment, I will then preſume that Europe is more ancient than the Cape of Good-Hope, —becauſe the ſummits of the mountains are not ſo ſteep,—their ſides incline more gradually, and the angular pieces of thoſe rocks yet uncovered with earth, are blunted and round.

I DO not hereby mean ſuch rocks as appear on the ſides of mountains, which the ſea, torrents, or the falling of rivers have rendered ſteep, nor the ſtones which the rain has left bare, by waſhing away the earth which covered them; and much leſs, thoſe flints in the fields, which the plough covers one year and uncovers the next: but thoſe only, which by their weight and ſituation, are ſubject to the laws of gravity. I ſaw none of this laſt ſort in the plains of Ruſſia and Poland. Finland is paved with rocks, but of a totally different ſhape; 'tis a ſeries of ſmall hills and vallies of ſolid rock, and may be called a petrified earth. Nevertheleſs as fir-trees grow on the tops of thoſe hills, it ſhould ſeem that they have been a long time in the air, which has decompoſed them.——It appears even that in a climate leſs cold than the one I ſpeak of, this diſſolution would be very conſiderably accelerated; but that the ſnow covering the ſurface for ſix months in the year, and the ground being hardened by the froſt, the effect of their weight is retarded.

THE kind of rocks moſt proper for theſe experiments, is ſuch as are found in the neigbourhood of Fontainbleau. It is a free-ſtone, in huge maſſes detached from each other, the edges of all which the hand of time has rounded off. Some of them are half,—ſome two thirds buried in the earth, and others lay on the ſurface in heaps, as if brought thi-

ther for the purpoſe of building.—Theſe laſt, are probably the ſummits of mountains, which have not yet entirely diſappeared.—Each century, has perhaps, ſeen them farther and deeper immerſed, and two thouſand years ago, it is not unlikely, but that they were as lofty mountains as many at this day. The force with which the elements act, and the intrinſic gravity tends to preſerve the globular form of the earth. In time, the mountains of Europe will be far leſs ſteep than they now are,—in time, the ſea will have diſſolved the rocks by which its bounds are limited, and upon which it is continually breaking, in like manner as it has already deſtroyed thoſe once famous ones of Scylla and Charibdis.

BEWILDERED in theſe reflections,—I took from my pocket a book of ancient hiſtory, and opened a place wherein, ſpeaking of ſome families of Europe, the author ſays, *ſo great is their antiquity, that their origin ſeems loſt in the night of time*, as if their anceſtors had been born before the ſun. In another place, he ſpeaks of the people of the North, as the fabricators of human nature, *Officina Gentium*; "as a torrent of "barbarians, which the North could no longer "contain."

I HAVE lived ſome time in the North, and have travelled through more than eight hundred leagues of it, but I do not recollect to have ſeen there one ſingle monument of antiquity. Yet, we ſee durable traces of all populous nations every where elſe, and from the lowly ſteeple in a country village, to the pyramids of Egypt, every land where mankind have inhabited, bears teſtimony to their induſtry. The plains of Greece and of Italy are covered with antique ruins, why are they not likewiſe ſeen in Ruſſia and Poland

Poland?—becauſe mankind can only increaſe according to the growth of the fruits of the earth where they inhabit,—and becauſe the North of Europe lay barren and uncultivated, while the South was covered with harveſts of corn, vineyards, and olive trees. The people of the South, in their abundance, raiſed altars to every Good.—Ceres, Pomona, Bacchus, Flora, Pales, the Zephyrs, the Nymphs, were Pleaſures, therefore they were Deities.—The Virgins offered pigeons to the God of Love, and garlands to the Graces, praying to Lucina to bleſs them with good huſbands, who ſhould be faithful and affectionate. Religion was congenial with nature, and, as acknowledgement was in every heart, the earth under this auſpicious ſky, was covered with altars. They roſe in every orchard to the Deity of gardens; to Neptune on the ſea-ſhore, and in every bower to Cupid: The Nayads had their grottos,—the Muſes, porticos,—Minerva, peryſtiles—An obeliſk to Diana, appeared in every copſe, and the temple of Venus raiſed its cupola over the trees of every foreſt.

BUT no ſooner was an inhabitant driven from this delightful climate, to ſeek a new eſtabliſhment in the North; no ſooner had he, with his unfortunate family found himſelf within the frigid zone—Heavens! what could equal the horror which ſeized him on the approach of winter! The ſun ſcarcely preſented his red and gloomy diſk above the horizon, the winds roaring through the woods, and ſplitting the trunks of the fir-tree and the oak,—the fountains congealed, and the courſe of rivers ſtayed by the freezing hand of WINTER. Deep ſnows covering with a ſpotleſs robe the meadows, woods, and lakes alike. The plants, the flowers, the fountains,—every thing by which human life

can

can receive comfort, or even ſupport—dead. He can ſcarcely breathe, nor dares he touch any object that preſents itſelf to his eyes—for death is in the air, and every thing he ſees, furniſhes him with new cauſe of ſorrow. When this unhappy creature hears the cries of his helpleſs infants, beholds their tears freezing on their livid cheeks, and their arms ſtretched out to him for the help he has not to afford them, diſcoloured, and perhaps mortifying.—How horrible muſt be his ideas of the land he is come into—Can he hope for a poſterity from nature, or to reap harveſts of grain from fields of adamant.—His hand muſt tremble at opening a ſoil replete with death to his inhabitants.—Nothing remains but to participate his miſery with his flocks: with them to brouze on the moſs and bark of trees, and continue to wander over a land, where a ſtate of repoſe can be purchaſed only with life. How then can he think of building?—A den or cavern dug in a rock is his temporary protection from the cold; and if from the boſom of theſe ſnows, a monument of any kind ſhould ariſe—what other can it be than a tomb?

IT is probable that the North of Europe was unpeopled till the Southern parts were nearly abandoned. The Greeks, harraſſed by their ſucceſſive tyrants, preferred the ſweets of liberty to thoſe of their native climate, which they therefore deſerted, and carried with them into Hungary, Bohemia, Poland and Ruſſia, thoſe arts by means of which, man alone, of all animals, can triumph over the elements, and bid defiance to the inclemencies of every climate. From the Morea to Archangel, an extent of five hundred leagues, no language is ſpoken but the Sclavonic, the words and even letters of which derive from the Greek.

The

THE Northern nations are therefore of Greek deſcent, — they, however, again ſunk into a ſtate of barbariſm; but are now once more emerging from it, under the influence of a legiſlature more mild than that of former times. Peter the Great, has laid the foundation of their modern grandeur, and in our time, they live under the government of an Empreſs who gives them laws worthy of Areopagus.

LET.

LETTER XXVII.

OBSERVATIONS upon the ISLAND of ASCENSION. DEPARTURE. Arrival in FRANCE.

I WAS totally abſorbed in my reflections upon this iſland—Pleaſing objects are for our enjoyment, calamitous ones for our reflection. The happy man reaſons but ſeldom—the afflicted mind meditates, and in meditation often finds relief from the evils which depreſs it. So true is it that nature hath made pleaſure the univerſal purſuit of man, and when his heart is incapable of it, ſhe places its ſeat in his head.

ALTHOUGH the iſland of Aſcenſion may be ſaid to be without earth and without water, it does not occupy a place upon the globe to no purpoſe. The turtle has made choice of this coaſt to lay its eggs, which it does for three months in the year. 'Tis a ſolitary animal that flies frequented ſhores. A veſſel's anchoring here for twenty four hours will drive them from the bay for ſeveral days, and if a gun be fired, they will not return in many weeks. The frigate and booby are more familiar, being not ſo much experienced; but theſe, upon ſhores that are inhabited, keep upon the very ſummits of the rocks, and will not ſuffer themſelves to be approached. This iſland is their commonwealth,—the primitive manners are retained, and the ſpecies multiply; for no tyrant can take

take up his abode amongſt them. Doubtleſs the common mother of all beings has ordained that barren rocks and ſands ſhould be in the ocean, deſolate indeed, but protected by the jarring elements, as a refuge and aſylum, where the animal world may enjoy what even among mankind are deemed her chiefeſt bleſſings, tranquillity and liberty.

FERTILE and pleaſant countries are deprived of their natural freedom, which this iſland ſtill retains. Surrounded by the Atlantic it has eſcaped that ſlavery, which is the bane and the diſgrace of Africa and America. It is common to all nations, poſſeſſed by none, and is frequented by few but Engliſh and French ſhips which ſtop in their way from India to catch turtle. The Dutch being victualled at the Cape, ſeldom put in here.

THE air of Aſcenſion is pure—I lay two nights together on the ground without covering; I have ſeen rain fall from the clouds whoſe courſe was ſtayed by the ſummit of the green mountain, which however did not appear to be much higher than Montmartre—This ſtopping of the clouds is occaſioned by attraction, which is always more forcible at ſea than within land.

IF a ſailor is ill of the ſcurvy while here, they cover him with ſand, and he quickly finds his complaint relieved. Although I was very well, I held my legs for ſome time in this dry bath, and felt for ſeveral days after an extraordinary quick circulation of blood, which I could not account for. But I ſuppoſe that this ſand being compoſed of calcareous particles, attracts to the ſkin the humours of the body it incloſes; like thoſe abſorbent ſtones which

which are applied to a ſting to extract the venom: it were to be wiſhed that ſome able phyſician would make experiments in other diſorders, of a remedy which inſtinct alone has taught to the ſcorbutic ſailor.

WE were to paſs one more night aſhore—At ten in the evening I bathed in a ſmall bay, between the landing place and the main, ſurrounded with a ſemi-circular chain of rocks. At the end of this bay the ſand is raiſed to a height of fifteen feet, and runs down to the ſea in a ſlope. There are ſeveral rocks at the entrance, but they do not riſe above the ſurface of the water. The ſea when much agitated, breaks over them with a prodigious noiſe,—I was obliged to gripe faſt by the rocks, as the billows beat over my head almoſt every minute.

THE 24th in the morning, the bar was very high, the ſhip hoiſted a flag as a ſignal for us to come off. It was impoſſible for the boat to land at the uſual place; ſhe had been taking in a dozen of turtles that had been reſerved, and was then ſwinging by a grappling iron at half a muſqet ſhot from where we ſtood. Some of the ſtrongeſt among the ſailors pulled off their clothes, and watching the moment of the ſurges leaving the ſhore, carried the luggage and paſſengers on board—running as faſt as they could the whole way.

I told the officer who commanded, that I thought her very ſufficiently loaden—twenty perſons were on board her, and as many remained on ſhore—but being deſirous of ſaving the trouble of a ſecond trip; they continued to go on board. In the mean time, a monſtrous ſurge raiſing up the barge, broke the grappling, and threw her on the ſhore—eight or ten men up to the middle in the ſea expected to be

daſhed

daſhed to pieces—Had ſhe brought up ſideways, ſhe had been loſt, but luckily ſhe was thrown in ſtern-foremoſt. Two or three waves ſucceedingr lifted her almoſt upright, by which means ſhe ſhipped a good deal of water aft—The people on board in their fright jumped into the water, and were near drowning—But at length the united efforts of us all, ſet her once more afloat.

ON her return for us who remained, ſhe narrowly eſcaped the like accident, and happy for us that ſhe did ſo, for we were not hands enough to have got her off—The ſhip muſt have ſailed—and we had been left on an iſland whereon we could have found neither proviſions, wood, nor water. And yet it is ſaid there are ſome little ponds of freſh water at the foot of the green mountain—and a few goats, who finding no herbage but dog's tooth, are half ſtarved. Cocoa trees were planted here, but would not grow.

THE South Eaſt part of Aſcenſion is compoſed of lava, and the North Eaſt of hillocks of cinders; whence I conclude that the wind was to the S. E. when the volcano roſe from the ſea—and that it blew gently, elſe the cinders would have been too much ſcattered to have formed the promontories of hills they now compoſe further that the internal heat (or combuſtible matter) of volcanos is not kindled by the revolutions of the atmoſphere, and that the commotions and tempeſts of the earth, are independent of thoſe of the air.

THEY ſhould ſeem rather to depend upon the water;—of all the volcanos I have ſeen or know of, there are none but what are near the ſea, or ſome great lake—I made this obſervation ſome time ago when

I was endeavouring to account for the cauſe of them —and being confirmed by nature, my opinion is the more likely to be a juſt one

WE ſet ſail at five in the evening of the 24th of March. We lived upon turtle for near a month after —They were kept alive all time by laying them ſometimes on the back and ſometimes on the belly,—and by throwing ſea-water over them ſeveral times a day.

TURTLE is very nutritive, but one is ſoon tired of it—the fleſh is very tough, and the eggs but of an indifferent taſte.

WE repaſſed the line, having calms ſometimes, and ſometimes ſtorms. The currents run northward very perceptibly; they more than once, carried us ten leagues in four and twenly hours, when there was no wind—The 28th of April in lat. 32 N. we ſaw an eclipſe of the moon at about eleven o'clock at night: we had ſeveral days of calms; they are ſaid to be the intervals between the different winds which prevail in theſe latitudes. From 28 to 23 deg. N. the ſea was covered with a marine plant, called *grappe de raiſin* (cluſter of grapes) it was full of ſmall crabs and the fry of fiſh. This perhaps is a means which nature makes uſe of to people the ſhores of iſlands with animals, which could not be tranſported thither by any other: the fiſh frequenting near the coaſt being never found in the main ſea.

With great joy we ſaw the pole ſtar again appear above the horizon—and the pleaſure was heightened every night that it roſe; the ſight of it made my evening walks very agreeable. One night at ten o'clock as I was walking upon the quarter deck, ſomebody ſpoke in much haſte and ſeeming fright to the

the officer who had the watch: he bid the man light a candle, and follow him along the forecaſtle. I took the ſame way they did, and preſently we were not a little ſurprized to ſee a cloud of thick and black ſmoke iſſue from the hatchway.—The ſailors of the watch were laid down very quietly upon one of the ſails of the mizen maſt, and when we called to them, were ſeized with terror. Two or three of the moſt daring went down the hatchway with a lanthorn, crying out that we ſhould all periſh. We looked about for buckets, but could not find even one. Some were for ringing the bell to call up the people, others for working the pump that was aft, to carry water below; every man propoſed, but no man attended; the diſorder cannot be deſcribed.

AT length being all ranged with our heads ſtooping over the hatchway, we waited our deſtiny. The ſmoke increaſed, and we even ſaw gleams of flame iſſue from the crevices. Preſently however, a voice from below called out, that the fire had only catched ſome wood put into the oven to dry.—This moment of inquietude appeared like a century. Hard fate of ſeamen! In the midſt of fine weather, in the midſt of the moſt perfect ſecurity, and in the very hour of return to our native country, one unfortunate accident had well nigh brought upon us the moſt dreadful of all deaths.

THE 16th—the ſailors were exerciſed in firing at a mark, which was a bottle hung at the end of the yard; the guns were tried: We had five of them. This was done, that we might be prepared, in caſe we were attacked by the *Saltin's**—Fortunately we

* There is no Engliſh word for *Saltins*—but *Sallee* being about that latitude, I ſuppoſe the Author means the Rovers of that place. *T.*

met with none. Our ſmall arms were in ſuch bad condition that at the firſt firing one of them burſt near me, and wounded the ſailor that held it very dangerouſly.

THE 17th, I perceived at noon day, upon the ſea, a long band of a greeniſh caſt, in direction from North to South—It was motionleſs, and extended near half a league. The veſſel paſſed it at the South end. There was no ſwell upon it, or near it. The captain as well as the officers agreed that it muſt be a ſhoal or flat—it is not marked upon the chart. We were now as high as the Azores.

THE 20th of May—we ſaw an Engliſh ſhip bound to America; they told us we were in 23 deg. longitude, which was 140 leagues farther to the weſtward than we imagined ourſelves.

THE 22d of May, in 45 deg. 45 min. N. we thought we ſaw a rock, over which the ſea broke. The weather being calm, they hove out a boat. It was a ſhelf of ſurf formed by the bed of the ſea—Two hours after, we found a maſt furniſhed with rigging, which appeared as if cut away from an Engliſh ſhip in ſtreſs of weather. We took it on board joyfully, for we began to want firewood. and what was worſe, proviſions;—having made but one meal a day for eight days paſt.

THE ſky had for ſome time been clouded over in the middle of the day, ſo that we did not know in what latitude we were. The 28th, the wind blew ſo hard that the veſſel could carry none but her lower ſails. At eleven in the morning we perceived a ſmall ſhip before us—we paſſed to leeward of her. There were ſeven men upon her deck, pumping with all their

their might; the water ran out of all the ſcuppers. We neither of us made much way, and in tacking, ſometimes paſſed ſo cloſe, that I feared the next wave would have run us foul of each other. The Pilot in his red night cap, called out to us through a ſpeaking trumpet, that he had not been four and twenty hours from Bourdeaux, and was bound to Ireland. We ſuſpected him by his haſte, and the bad condition of his veſſel to be a ſmuggler,—it is cuſtomary at ſea, as well as on land, to form our opinions of ſtrangers by their appearance.

ABOUT ten o'clock, the wind ſubſided; the clouds ſeperated into two long ranges, between which the ſun ſhone out. All the ſails were now ſet, and men placed upon the main top to look out,—her head was kept to the North Eaſt, that we might have the better chance for ſeeing land before evening.

At four o'clock we ſaw a ſmall ſmack, which we hailed, but ſhe did not anſwer: ſhe was driving before the wind. At five o'clock a man aloft, called out, *land, land, to leeward*—we immediately went upon deck—and many of the people ran up the ſhrouds, we preſently diſtinguiſhed rocks, that whitened as we approached—they were thought to be the mountains of Penmanmaur. We lay too during the night, and at break of day perceived the coaſt three leagues a head: but nobody knew what land it was. The wind was ſcant, and by no means ſuited to our impatience. At length we ſaw a boat, and hailing her, was anſwered, that ſhe had a Pilot on board. Overjoyed at hearing the voice of a Frenchman juſt come from his native ſhore—the crew ran with eagerneſs to the ſhip's ſide to ſee the Pilot come aboard—*What cheer, Brother*, ſaid the Captain, *what land is*

that? Belleiſle, ſaid the Pilot—"*D'ye think we ſhall have a breeze?*" —"*An'it pleaſe God maſter, perhaps we may.*"

HE had brought with him a large barley loaf, which having been baked in France, we very ſoon eat up for him.

THE calm laſted all day; towards evening it freſhened, and in the morning we were along ſide the Iſle of Grois and came to an anchor.

THE cuſtom-houſe officers came on board; and after them a croud of fiſhermen.—We bought ſome freſh fiſh, determining to eat our laſt meal together;—during which, we got up, we ſat down again,—but we did not eat,—we could think of nothing, we could look at nothing, but the coaſt of France.

THE crew were overwhelmed at the thoughts of their return home, with a joy, that ſhewed itſelf in the moſt extravagant ways—I ſpoke to ſeveral, but could not get an anſwer from one of them—I therefore agreed with a Fiſherman to carry me and my baggage on ſhore, and having taken a hearty and friendly leave of the Captain, went into the boat, and was ſoon landed—thanking God for having once more reſtored me in ſafety to my native country.

LETTER XXVIII.

ON VOYAGES AND VOYAGERS.

IT is cuſtomary to try in the beginning of a book to gain the good will of the reader, who very often does not read the preface at all; in my opinion 'tis much better to wait till the end—to the very moment when he is going to form his opinion; then it is impoſſible for him to eſcape without paying attention to the Authors excuſes—the following are mine.

I have compoſed this work as well as I could, and nothing has been wanting to give it all the perfection I am capable of giving it—if it is ill executed—it is not therefore my fault; for one ſhould be blamed for doing ill, but when we can do better.

IF the ſtyle is faulty, I ſhall be very glad to ſee its errors pointed out; it ſhall be my taſk to correct them. During the ten years I have been abſent from my country, I have almoſt forgotten my own language, and I have obſerved that it is often of greater uſe to ſpeak well, than to think, or even to act well. My conjectures and my ideas of nature, are materials which I deſign for the conſtruction of a conſiderable edifice; till I am able to elevate which, I ſubmit them to criticiſm. Juſt cenſures are like thaws, which diſſolve ſoft ſtones, but harden hewn ones. I ſhall trouble you with one more obſervation only, which I ſhall now

make uſe of—twas ſaid, " a Saint began with a ſingle ſtone, what afterwards became a magnificent Abby—he atchieved this miracle by time and patience,—for my part 'tis no wonder if I loſt both the one and the other.

HAVING ſaid enough of myſelf, let us go on to more important objects—'Tis rather ſingular that that there has not been one voyage publiſhed by thoſe of our writers who have the greateſt fame in literature and philoſophy. We have no model of this ſo intereſting ſpecies of writing and we ſhall long want one, ſince Monſieur de Voltaire, D'Alembert, Buffon, and Rouſſeau have given us none. Montaign * and Monteſquieu have written their travels, but have not publiſhed them. It cannot be ſaid that they thought thoſe countries in Europe where they had been, ſufficiently known; ſince they have made ſo many new obſervations on even our own manners which are ſo familiar to us. I believe this ſpecies of writing, ſo little attempted, abounds with difficulties. It is neceſſary that there ſhould be an almoſt univerſal knowledge, a plan well arranged, warmth of ſtyle, and truth. One muſt ſpeak of every thing.

IF any ſubject is omitted, the work is imperfect—If all is ſaid that can be ſaid, one becomes diffuſe and unintereſting.

WE have notwithſtanding ſome valuable writers of voyages, of whom Addiſon is in my opinion among the foremoſt—Unluckily he is not a Frenchman. Chardin is philoſophic, but prolix. The Abbè de Choiſi

* Since the Author wrote this letter, the manuſcript of Monſieur Montaign's travels through Italy was found in an old cheſt, and was publiſhed at Paris in the courſe of laſt year. *T.*

ſaves the reader the irkſomneſs of a ſea journal—he is agreeable, but that is all we can ſay of him. Tournefort deſcribes learnedly the monuments and plants of Greece, but on ſuch a ſubject as the ruins of Athens a man ſhould write with more feeling. La Hontan ſpeculates, and ſometimes bewilders himſelf in the ſolitudes of Canada. Lery deſcribes the manners of the Braſilians, as well as his own adventures, with a pleaſing ſimplicity. From theſe different geniuſes might be compoſed one excellent one—but every man has one peculiar to himſelf—for inſtance, the ſailor who wrote in his journal that he "paſſed "by Teneriff at the diſtance of four leagues, the "inhabitants of which place ſeemed very affable."

SOME Travellers ſpeak on one ſubject only; this ſeeks after monuments, ſtatues, inſcriptions, medals, &c. If they meet with a man of extraordinary learning, they beg of him to write his name and ſome ſentence in their *album*. Althou gh this cuſtom is a commendable one, I ſhould prefer an enquiry after examples of probity, virtue and greatneſs of ſoul of the moſt eminent men of each place.—Had I written my voyages to the north, the world would have ſeen therein, the names of Olgorouki, the Palatine Xatorinſki, Duval, &c. Remarkable buildings would not have been unnoticed, ſuch as the Arſenal of Berlin, and the Royal Academy of Cadets at Peterſburg: As to ſubjects of antiquity, I confeſs that they inſpire me with none but the moſt gloomy ideas. A triumphal arch is to me a proof of the weakneſs of human nature and the uncertainty of its purſuits; the column, the ſtatue remains,—but the conqueror to whoſe honour they were erected, is no more.

I prefer the tendril of a vine to a pyramid, and ſhould with far greater pleaſure import to France one nutritive plant, than the ſilver ſhield of Scipio.

IN the ſame degree that the arts become naturalized among us—nature herſelf is eſtranged—We are even ſo artificial that we give to objects, merely natural, the appellation of *curioſities*, and ſeek for proofs of divinity among books, in which (thoſe of revelation apart) but vague reflections and general indications of univerſal order are to be found. Yet would we ſhew the ingenuity of an artiſt, we ſhould rather particularize the ſeveral parts of his work, than give a general definition only of it. Nature preſents to us relations ſo very ingenious, intentions ſo beneficient, and ſcenes, which though mute, and I might even ſay imperceptible, are ſo expreſſive, that they muſt influence the moſt inattentive mind—and excite an exclamation of, *ſurely there is a* GOD.

THE art of deſcribing natural objects is ſo little known or uſed, that terms to expreſs them are not yet invented. Attempt but the deſcription of a mountain in ſuch manner that it ſhall be recognized; when you have ſpoken of the baſe, the flanks, and the ſummit, you have ſaid every thing. But what a variety is diſcernable in theſe forms, round, long, flat, hollow—'tis a maſs of words without information. The difficulty is the ſame as to hills and vallies—If a man were to deſcribe a palace, he could do it without being the leaſt embarraſſed—'Tis of ſome of the five orders of architecture—'tis ſubdivided into ſurbaſe, principal ſtory, entablature; and in each of theſe, from the plinth to the corniſh, there is not a ſingle moulding without its proper name.

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WE need not wonder then at the imperfect accounts travellers give of natural objects—In delineating a country, they tell you of towns, rivers, and mountains,—but the picture is as barren, and conveys as little idea to the imagination, as a mere geographical chart——Of Indoſtan or of Europe, 'tis all one. The phyſiognomy (if the expreſſion may be allowed) is not there. Do they ſpeak of a plant? they give a detail of the flowers, the leaves, the bark, the roots; but its port, its ſemblage,, elegance, or inelegance are not to be defined—The ſimilitude of an object depends upon the harmony, the unity, and connection of its ſeveral parts—for you may have the meaſure and proportion of all the muſcles in a man's body, but you will not therefore have his portrait.

IF travellers, who have treated of nature, are defective in point of expreſſion, they amply make up by the abundance of their conjectures. For a long time I was induced to believe, from the accounts I had read, that men might live in the woods in a ſtate of nature. I did not find one ſingle wild, and unknwon fruit, that was fit to eat in all the Iſle of France; and thoſe I taſted, I did ſo at the hazard of being poiſoned. Some few indeed were of a tolerable taſte, but of theſe 'twould have been hardly poſſible to collect enough for the breakfaſt of a monkey—there are indeed ſeveral noxious roots, that are bulbous and of a ſort called *Nymphea, (or Water Lilly)* but even theſe grow under water, where 'tis not likely our man in the ſtate of nature would ſeek for them. At the Cape I expected to have found mankind better ſupplied. I ſaw artichokes of a fine freſh colour growing upon buſhes; but they were ſo crabbed, they were not eatable. In the woods of France and Germany there is no other than the maſt of the beach and the fruit of

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the chesnut—and these last but a short season. It is affirmed that in the golden age of the Gauls, our ancestors lived upon acorns; but the acorns of our oaks are too astringent, those of the green oak only being digestible. It is also rarely found in France, altho' very commonly in Italy.

THE firs in the forests of the north yield a kind of apple, upon which the squirrels feed greedily, but I doubt they are not proper for the food of men. Nature would have dealt but hardly with the sovereign of the animal world, had she spread a plenteous table for every other race of beings, and left him destitute; but that he alone is endued with reason, and a disposition to society, without which the former would be but of little use to to him. From this one observation we may draw the following consequences—that the most stupid peasant is superior to the most intelligent animal—which no art could teach to till, to sow, and reap,—that man is born for society, and incapable of living without it—and that the community owes to each individual that subsistance, which community alone can provide, and without which the individual must perish.

ANOTHER fault of travellers—is, their placing happiness any where rather than in their native country. Their descriptions of foreign countries are so entirely agreeable, that they incline one ever after to be out of humour with ones own.

NATURE seems in my opinion to have more equally distributed her good things, than we may at first apprehend. I know not whether to prefer a very hot, or a very cold climate. The latter is the more wholsome; moreover the cold is an inconvenience easily

to

to be remedied, whereas the heat, is hardly to be endured, and can never be avoided. For one ſix months I have ſeen the landſchape about Peterſburg perfectly white; for another ſix months I have ſeen the Iſle of France totally black; add to this the deſtruction occaſioned by the vermin and the hurricanes, and which then ſhall we chuſe? It is true that in India the trees are in leaf all the year round, and bear fruit without being grafted—and that the birds are numerous and beautiful,—but all things conſidered I give France the preference, eſpecially if the conſtant ſpectacles of miſery be conſidered in the eſtimate—for the ſight of one man in a ſtate of wretchedneſs is ſufficient to effectually deſtroy my happineſs. Can one think without horror that Africa, America, and a great part of Aſia are in ſlavery? In Indoſtan all directions to ſervants are delivered with a ſtroke of a rattan; inſomuch, that the cane has obtained the title of King of the Indies; even in the boaſted country of China, corporal puniſhments are inflicted for the moſt trifling offences. Among us,—culprits even, are treated with ſome degree of conſideration as men. How deſolate, how rigid ſoever the northern climates may be deemed—nature in its rudeſt ſtate will ſtill in ſome reſpect preſent me with a pleaſing proſpect. I have been witneſs of very affecting ſcenes even among the rugged rocks of Finland. I have ſeen there, ſummers finer and more ſerene than thoſe of the tropics, days without night, lakes ſo covered with ſwans, ducks, woodcocks, plovers, &c. that one might ſay they had forſaken all other waters to come hither and build their neſts. The ſides of the rocks are frequently covered with moſs of a ſhining purple, and the *Kloucva* * with

* A beautiful kind of creeper with a red flower.

its

its flowers of ſcarlet, and leaves of lively green, having ſpread abroad a carpet on the ground, meets with the ſtately fir, and round the duſky pyramid twines its fragrant branches, forming retreats alike adapted to love or to philoſophy. In a deep valley, and on the margin of a meadow, ſtood the manſion of a gentleman of family, where repoſe was undiſturbed, ſave by the ſound of a torrent of water, which the eye ſaw with pleaſure falling and foaming upon the black ſurface of a neighbouring rock. 'Tis true, that in winter the verdure and the birds diſappear together. Wind, ſnow, hoar froſt, and hail envelope and beat upon the houſe, while chearfulneſs and hoſpitality reign within. They will go fifteen leagues to viſit each other, and the arrival of a friend proclaims a feſtival for a week: * they drink the healths of their gueſts, their ladies, and their great men, to the ſound of horns and drums. The old men ſit ſmoaking by the fire and relate the feats of their youth, while the young fellows in their boots, dance to the fife or tabor, round the Finland maid; who in her furred petticoat, appears like Minerva in the midſt of the youths of Sparta.

IF their manners are uncouth, their hearts are not without ſenſibility—They talk of love, of pleaſure, of Paris; for Paris is the metropolis of the female ſex. 'Tis thither that the women of Ruſſia, Poland, and Italy come to learn the art of ruling the men,

* The women are of their parties, and 'tis but juſt that as they bear their huſbands company in the wars, they ſhould preſide in their entertainments. Inſtances of conjugal affection among theſe people are frequent and extraordinary. The wives of ſome general officers I have known, have followed their huſbands in the field from their firſt entering into the army. Note of the Author.

with

with ribbands and laces; 'tis there the fair Pariſian exerts her power with humour ever gay, and graces ever new, and tyrannizes over her Engliſh lover, who throws at her feet, his gold, and harder to part with, his melancholy; while ſhe, from the very boſom of art, laughing prepares, a garland which binds by its pleaſures every people of Europe.

OF all cities I ſhould prefer Paris, not for its diverſions, but becauſe its inhabitants are a good ſort of people, and live in liberty. What are to me its ſplendid coaches, its Hotels, its crowded ſtreets, its public ſhews, its banquets, viſitings, and friendſhips as ſoon diſſolved as made. Theſe numerous pleaſures are productive of only ſuperficial happineſs, and enjoyment. Life ought not to be a mere ſpectacle. 'Tis in the country only that a man enjoys the genuine feelings of his heart, and the pleaſures of ſociety with his wife, his children and friends. A country life is preferable in every reſpect to living in towns; the air is pure, the proſpects enlivening, the walks fine, proviſions at hand, and the manners of men, better, becauſe more ſimple. The lover of liberty depends upon heaven alone: here the miſer receives new preſents hourly, the warrior gives himſelf up to the chace, the voluptuary places here his garden, and the philoſopher may indulge his meditations without fear of interruption. Of animals, ſhew me one more uſeful than the ox, more noble than the horſe, or more faithful than the dog.

OF all rural ſcenes, I prefer theſe of my own country; not on account of their ſuperior beauty, but becauſe I have been brought up there. In a man's native place there is a ſecret attraction, a ſomething affecting, which is not the gift of fortune, nor can any other communicate it. Where are the games of our infant days?

days?—days when pleaſure abounded without forethought and without alloy? What joy I have experienced at finding a bird's neſt!—With what delight have I cheriſhed and careſſed a partridge—received the ſtrokes of its bill—and felt under my hand the palpitation of its heart and the fluttering of its wings! Happy the man who reviſits the ſcenes where every thing was beloved, every thing was amiable—the meadow he had ran races in! or the orchard he had ravaged! more happy he, who has never quitted you, paternal roof, ſacred aſylum! The wanderer returns indeed, but does not find his home;—of his friends, ſome are dead,—ſome gone away; his family is diſperſed, his protectors——but life is no more than a ſhort voyage; and the age of man like a winter's day. I will not however think upon its troubles, but call to mind the virtues, the good offices, and the conſtancy of my friends. Perhaps their names and my grateful acknowledgement may continue to live even in theſe letters—Perhaps they may ſometime reach even to you, amiable inhabitants of the Cape! For thee unhappy African, who, on the rocks of Mauritius bewaileſt thy truly wretched lot; it is not for my feeble hand to alleviate thy griefs, or dry thy tears—but if I have induced thy tyrant maſter to look upon them, with regret, and upon himſelf, with remorſe as the cauſe of them—I have nothing more to aſk of India—I ſhall have made my fortune.

PARIS, *January* 1, 1773.

LET-

LETTER XXIX.

OF TREES.

AMONG the curioſities I have brought home, are ſome madrepores, which are very common in the ſeas of India, the Iſlands in general being encompaſſed with them. They grow under water, and form foreſts of ſeveral leagues extent, in which fiſhes ſwim about, as birds fly in the woods. The madrepores do not bear fruit, nor can they be included in the vegetable ſyſtem; they are the work of an infinite number of ſmall animals, who unite their efforts for the formation of theſe plants of the ſea. The ſhrubs which I have ſent with the madrepores, are called litophites, and are, as well as the corals, equally the work of ſmall animals. This, which you may look upon as a mere conjecture, is confirmed by microſcopical obſervation. The chymical experiments on this matter are rather uncertain, becauſe the reaſonings of chymiſtry are founded upon the diſſolution of the ſubject. At length, however a concluſion is drawn from the regularity of theſe works, in favour of the opinion, that they are produced and effected, by beings actuated by a ſpirit of order and intelligence. After all, a ſhrub is not more difficult to make than an hexagonal cell of wax, as formed by bees. The diſpute ſubſiſted for ſome time; but all the world is now agreed *.

* All the ſponges have the figure of plants, and are branched in ſo many different ways, that we could hardly believe them to be the work of marine inſects,—their texture is ſo compact, and their fibres ſo delicate, that it is inconceivable how theſe animals can lodge in them. BOUGAINVILLE, on Nat. Hiſt. of Iſle de Malouines. *T.*

But

IN my opinion, that every flower is inhabited; I ſtand entirely alone. * Do not think I mean to adopt the Grecian fancy of the Hamadryads, that every Laurel had its Daphne, and that every one unfortunately killed by a Quoit, is the inhabitant of one ſort of tree; or that all who die of ſelf-love ſhould be lodged in the Narciſſus.—Could I abſolutely confirm the truth of this ſyſtem, I ſhould not thereby prove the purpoſe of univerſal happineſs to be advanced.—The legs and arms may be lopped off from the ſiſters of Phaeton, for a clown to make faggots of.—My inhabitants have no ſuch fears,—but they are wiſe, and they are ingenious.

I AM aware that the ſupport of this opinion, will be more difficult, than of that with reſpect to the madrepores.—Men intereſt themſelves little about what paſſes at the bottom of the ſea, but 'tis widely different with flowers, which are objects generally known and uſed, and have a received opinion affixed to every thing relating to them. And yet I cannot ſee why our plants, which reſemble the madrepores in every other reſpect, ſhould not in their being inhabited alſo.

EVERY machine of a natural conſtruction has an internal organization, which tends to a certain effect, by a certain means. For example; in the ear there is a thin elaſtic concave membrane called the tympanum, adapted to the reception of ſounds; and in the eye, a ſort of tranſparent and convex membrane, which collects the rays of light upon the retina. The ear is evidently contrived for the purpoſe of hearing,

* See an Eſſay on the ſubjects of chymiſtry which was publiſhed in 1771, by Dr. Watſon, then Profeſſor of Chymiſtry, but ſince, Reg. Prof. of Divinity of Cambridge. T.

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as the eye for ſeeing: never will a blind man ſee by means of his ears, nor a deaf man hear with his eyes. If then a tree is a machine, one part of it muſt be appropriated for the bearing of flowers, another for the ſpreading of the roots, both of which would in that caſe, make their appearance, at the extremity of the plant aſſigned to them by nature:—but ſhould we plant a willow at the waters edge, with the head downwards, the roots would in due time bear leaves. But we are not for this reaſon to expect an hydraulic machine to ſprout from our planting a common pump in the ground, or that laying in a ſupine poſture any animal incapable of turning himſelf, his claws or his legs, would in proceſs of time grow out of his back.

CHANGE of poſition cannot affect the parts ſo as to cauſe either to perform the office of the other; in every machine which has been inveſtigated, each part produces its proper effect, nor can it be inſtrumental to any other. The laws of nature are ſimple, univerſal, and conſtant.

I LOOK upon a tree as a republic, and not as a machine. As ſoon as a branch of a willow is planted on the margin of a river, the little animals which were incloſed in it, betake themſelves to thoſe parts where their labours are moſt immediately neceſſary—All ſecondary conſiderations are laid aſide. The leaves are deſerted and fall off. Some employ themſelves in cloſing the breach that has been made in their habitation, by ſurrounding and covering it with a bourrelet (or pad). Others have puſhed forth in the earth, long ſubterraneous galleries, in ſearch of proviſions and materials for the uſe of the community. If they meet with a rock, they turn their courſe another way, perhaps ſurround it with their labours, to form a ſupport for the fabrick they are conſtruc-

ting. In ſome ſpecies, as in the oak, they drive down a long pivot (or *tap root*) which ſupports the whole habitation; each nation has its different manners: Some build upon piles like the Venetians, others upon the ſurface of the earth, as the Savages raiſe their cabbins or huts.

WHEN the diſorder is ſet to rights, they employ themſelves in making magazines of proviſions. Population among the little republicans is very rapid, becauſe of the eaſe of ſubſiſting. They live upon oils and volatile ſalts, with which the air and the earth abound. To obtain thoſe of the air, they have recourſe to the method practiſed by ſailors when in want of freſh water, and as they ſpead out their ſails in rainy weather,—theſe diſplay leaves, as ſo many ſurfaces, which, that they may not be carried away by the wind are moſt ingeniouſly faſtened by one point of ſupport, at the extremity of a pliant and elaſtic tail or ſtem.

SOME of them aſcend through the trunk with drops of liquor, others again deſcend by the bark with the ſuperfluous aliment.

IF the leaves were formed by the ſap, as may be imagined by ſome, the fruit and flowers might be ſo likewiſe: but, graft a wild ſtock; the fruits of the graft ſhall be good, while thoſe of the ſtock ſhall not be changed in the leaſt. If the ſap which has aſcended by the trunk of the graft, and has deſcended again by its bark, had partaken of any quality, it would have ſhewn itſelf in the fruits of the ſtock. But this does not appear, and why it does not is evident: The animals of the ſtock bring materials to cloſe the orifice made for inſerting the graft, which on their arrival, the inhabitants of the graft receive

and

and fabricate of them excellent fruits: whilſt thoſe of the ſtock continue to form their uſual indifferent ones. The materials are the ſame, the ducts are in common, but the artificers are different. It may be aſked, how theſe beings are protected from an inclement winter. They, as other animals, have inſtinctive precautions for their ſafety; they invelop their houſes with coverings proportioned in number and texture to the climate they are deſigned by nature to inhabit. The trees of the North, as the fir, the birch, &c. have three ſeveral barks,—thoſe of hotter countries have a ſort of cuticles only, by which the ſap deſcends.

THE ſagacity of theſe animals ſhews itſelf in another reſpect,—they proportion the height of their edifice to the ſize and extent of its baſe. In laying their foundations, they meet with a variety of obſtructions,—another tree,—rocks,—or an improper ſoil when they have reached a certain depth. In the air, they are not reſtrained, except by conſiderations of ſafety. We have a ſtrong proof of this in plants which twine and cling; for they ſpread themſelves to a very great extent without ſtopping. Some of the liannes have ſhoots ſo long, that it would be difficult to find the ends of them. The beans which climb, riſe to an extreme height, while the marſh bean ſcarcely attains to three feet—theſe are notwithſtanding equally long lived. We ſee alſo, that trees growing on mountains, are low in ſtature: thoſe of the ſame ſpecies in deep and ſheltered vallies, that have no fear of the winds, riſe with more boldneſs to a far greater height; and I am perſuaded, that if an elm in the courſe of its growth, were to paſs through a number of terraſſes, its inhabitants would with courage lay a ſeparate foundation in each, and raiſe the head to a height that would be prodigious.

THE Chineſe make a curious experiment, which will confirm what I have juſt advanced. They chooſe upon an orange-tree, a branch with its fruit, which they bind hard with a braſs wire, and cover this ligature with wet earth, upon which is preſently formed a bourrelet (or pad) with roots,—they then cut off this little tree, and with its large fruit ſet it upon a table. Had it been left in its original ſituation, it would have formed a ſecond ſtage of orange-tree. Here then we have another proof that trees are not machines,—becauſe they can always grow, and have no determined ſize.

* Monſieur Bougainville ſays, that in Otaheitee weeping willows are allowed to be planted before the houſes of great men only,—and that it is known, that by bending the branches of this tree, and planting them in the ground, the ſhadow may extend as far, and in what direction you pleaſe.——Of this tree the dining-hall of the Kings of Otaheitee is formed. T.

LET.

LETTER XXX.

Of FLOWERS.

THERE are many productions of nature, of which our eyes will not enable us to form a judgment; are we therefore to doubt of their exiſtence; ſhall we ſay that the animals of which I ſpeak are void of the ſeveral ſenſes of taſte, ſight, or feeling: as well may we doubt that the Romans, who built the amphitheatre of Nimes, eat, drank, or ſlept, becauſe the Hiſtorians, who tell us of this building, do not make particular mention of their doing ſo. Your garden is watered daily, and you aſk whether its inhabitants drink? You know that when plants deprived of air, decay almoſt immediately; and you again aſk, whether they breathe? Some flowers are known to cloſe, and ſhut up their leaves in the night; and others not only do ſo, but even change their colours.—Among trees alſo, there are ſome that cloſe their leaves entirely in the evening, as the tamarind-tree. Can we then deny the influence of the light upon them, when its effects are ſo evident.

THE movement and contraction of the ſenſitive plant upon the approach of the hand towards it, has been attributed to the animal heat; but this cannot be the caſe, becauſe I have ſeen it equally to move and contract upon being touched with a

ſtick, a ſtone being thrown towards it, and even by the wind *. Its powers of motion and contraction can proceed therefore from no other than an intrinſic cauſe.

SHOULD it be objected, that theſe animals depart from the univerſal ſyſtem of ſelf-preſervation; that all others employ themſelves in labours uſeful to themſelves, and theſe, in making flowers which anſwer no purpoſe but the pleaſure and gratification of mankind, and which, after all the pains and trouble beſtowed in their formation, can ſcarcely be ſaid to exiſt for a day. A reply is ready from the continuation of the account of their proceedings: The mother-country, and ſpeaking of *inhabitants*, the expreſſion I think may be allowed) being now too populous, the next care is to ſend forth colonies.—The fine weather in the ſpring, is the time choſen for this purpoſe, and for providing ſuſtenance for the emigrants.—Sugar, milk and honey are collected, and depoſited in buildings conſtructed with admirable ingenuity. The heat and action of the ſun is now of the greateſt conſequence, as well to bring to perfection the proviſions, as to promote and accelerate the ſponſalia.

IT ſhould ſeem, that this politic people, when they coloniſe, unite their coloniſts by ties the moſt forci-

* A new ſpecies of Senſitive Plant has been lately diſcovered in the marſhy parts of North America, which has been tranſplanted to England, and grows there. It is called the *Dionæa Muſcipuia*, or *Venus Attrapemouche*. Its leaf is no ſooner touched by a fly or other inſect, than it folds itſelf over its prey, and remains in that compreſſed ſtate till the captive is entirely conſumed. It will cloſe up equally if touched by a ſtraw, hair, or pin. Experiment has not yet aſcertained, whether this plant derives its nouriſhment from the flies it takes; but it ſeems very likely that it does ſo, and if this be the caſe, the *Attrapemouche* tends more than all hitherto known, of the different ſpecies of the Polypus, to confirm the analogy between animals and vegetables. *T.*

ble

ble, that nature knows or is capable of,—they adopt the meaſure of government when eſtabliſhing our ſettlements on the Miſſiſſippi, who ſent out very few perſons, but ſuch as were newly married.

THE males erect little hollow tubes, on the tops of which they form lodgements of golden duſt, from whence they deſcend to the bottom of the flowers, where the females expect them with impatience.

THE flower, appears to be the work of the female —It is hung with the moſt beautiful ſattins, purple—ſky-blue—black.—One may fancy it a bridal-chamber, whence are exhaled the moſt flagrant perfumes. —Or it may be called a vaſt temple, in which at once are celebrated an infinity of nuptial ceremonies—each leaf is a bed—each ſtamina a bride—and many families inhabit under the ſame roof.

SOMETIMES the females make their appearance by themſelves upon one tree, and the males upon another. Perhaps in theſe republics, the ſtronger ſex keeps the weaker one in ſubjection, and will not admit them to aſſociate upon public occaſions, altho' there is a neceſſity for making uſe of them upon particular ones.—Like the Amazons of old, who were ſerved by ſlaves of the male ſex, but allied themſelves with none but free people.

IN the palm-tree, the female alone is employed in preparing the conjugal bed; which when perceived by the male, he ſubmits himſelf to the diſpoſal of the winds, and is by them tranſported upon theſe beds, called by the botaniſts, Prolific Duſt.

I MAY ſeem on this occaſion, to be tranſported by my imagination beyond the bounds of probable rea-

ſon; let me therefore return to my ſubject and ſpeak of the form and ſhape of flowers; which is always circular, whatever be the form of the fruit.—Their leaves, or coronets are diſpoſed around as mirrors,—plain, ſpherical, or eliptic, ſo as properly to receive and reflect the heat to the focus of their curves, for the due formation of the embrio which contains the ſeed. The flowers that yield ſeed are ſingle ones, becauſe the placing of one mirror behind another, would have anſwered no end.

AMONG vegetables, the juices of which are viſcous and leſs liable to ferment, ſuch as bulbous and aquatic plants, my little geometricians conſtruct reverberating machines, in the form of furnaces, which, are portions of cylinders, funnels, or bells,—obſervable in lillies, tulips, hyacinths, jonquils, lillies of the valley, narciſſuſſes, &c.

THOSE that begin their labours early in the ſpring, adopt alſo this prudent mode of formation, witneſs the primroſe, crocus, ſnow-drop, &c.

THOSE that build expoſed to the air, and that grow but near to the ground—as the daiſy and piſſabed, form mirrors nearly plain. Thoſe on the other hand, that are ſomething more in the ſhade, as violets and ſtrawberries, form mirrors that are more concave.

THOSE that attempt to tranſplant themſelves in hot weather, contract the circumference of the flower, in order to diminiſh the effect, ſuch are the blue-bell, and pink, &c. Others, as the pomegranate and wild poppy, rumple up their leaves to ſhelter the diſk from the ſun, the two great heat of its rays rendering ſuch a protection neceſſary,—'tis the ſame in papillonaceous flowers, whoſe form is rather calculated to re-unite the direct rays of the ſun, than to collect anew their reflected heat.

ANOTHER

ANOTHER example of their attention, is, that the flowers of ſummer which have large cups, are faſtened to ligaments, by which they are rather ſuſpended than ſupported; they quickly loſe their flowers: of this kind, are the wild poppy, the poppy, the flower of the pomegranate, &c.

THERE is another ſpecies, of which the ſun-flower is one, whoſe leaves are diſpoſed as radii round the circumference; the flower is here placed upon a flexible knee, by means of which, the inhabitants are conſtantly turning it towards the ſun. One might fancy them ſo many Academicians, directing a teleſcope, or reflecting mirror towards that luminary.

The ſame prudent conduct is remarkable with reſpect to the colours of flowers,—white and yellow being the moſt adapted for collecting the reflected rays; the generality of ſpring and autumnal flowers are of thoſe or ſuch like bright and clear teints; the degree of heat being ſo ſmall makes the uſe of active mirrors neceſſary.

THE flowers of theſe two ſeaſons which are of a deep red, as the anemony, piony, and ſome ſort of tulips, have their centers black, as moſt proper to abſorb the rays immediately. The ſummer flowers are of deeper colours, and leſs adapted for reverberation. In this ſeaſon we frequently ſee blue and red, but black very rarely, becauſe it never reflects at all. Poppies which are of a deep brown, are, if expoſed to the ſun, burnt up before the flower is developed.

THE elevation of plants, their ſize, their colour and the form in which they are cut or ſcolloped, ſeem

all

all combined in a wonderful harmony—Conſidered in this light, flowers inſtead of being mere objects of pleaſure, are fit ſubjects of ſtudy for the ableſt geometricians.

NATURE in all her diſpoſitions is equally bountiful and juſt—Things for our uſe are furniſhed to us with ſimplicity: for ſuperfluity and enjoyment, with magnificence. Corn, olive trees and vines, are inſtances of the former, flowers, and many other beautiful natural productions, of the latter

THE animals of India as they differ from ours in their wants, are equally different in their operations —in our climates, heat is neceſſary: our animals therefore form the flowers before the leaves.—And farther north, they build a ſolid flower and cover it with ſcales—theſe are ranged in a conoid form upon a ſort of eſpalier. The fir tree and the birch would be parched up in hot countries, wherefore they never grow there.

THE trees of India are full of ſpreading leaves, under the ſhade of which grow the flowers. Their circumference is never very compact, as may be ſeen in the orange or citron trees.

ON trees that have but few leaves, as the agathis, the various ſorts of palms, the date, cocoa, and latanier,—the flowers grow in pendant cluſters—In this inverted ſtate, they are not liable to be ſcorched by the ſun, having no other heat than a reflected one. Trees of Europe bearing flowers in cluſters, bear them upright, as the vine, lilach, &c.

To

To conclude—In Europe the flowers ſeem to ſeek for the ſun; in India, to avoid and ſhun it, the greater number either growing cloſe to the trunk of the tree, or elſe hang down in bunches as thoſe above deſcribed.

LETTER XXXI.

OF FRUITS.

IT may be alledged as an argument againſt the ſyſtem for which I contend, that my animalcules reaſoning too much from conſequences, ſeem therein even to be wiſer than men. Wherefore is this but becauſe the animal is endued with an inſtinct, equal in effect to that experience which man is ever arriving at, and never attains to. The ſpider, weaves as ſoon as it iſſues from the egg—The portion of intelligence afforded to each ſpecies is perfect from the beginning, and ſuffices for all the wants of the animal—'Tis a general obſervation, that the ſmaller the animal, the greater its induſtry—Among birds, the ſwallow is more alert than the oſtrich: of inſects none is ſo ſmall, nor is any ſo laborious as the ant—Activity and adroitneſs ſeem given to the weaker animals as a compenſation for the want of ſtrength—and mine being ſo much ſmaller than all theſe; I am juſtified in believing that they are alſo more intelligent.

A degree of heat being amaſſed, ſufficient to unite the families at the bottom of the calice or cup of the flower, the whole nation is employed in carrying thither honey and milk. This laſt is a ſuſtenance apparently deſigned for all animals when in their infant ſtate; even the yolk of an egg, if 'tis diſſolved in water, is converted to a conſiſtence like cream. The colony then takes up its reſidence in the part called the *Bourgeon*, (or bud). The proviſions are ranged around, under the appearance of milk, which is ſoon after changed to an oily, and more ſolid ſubſtance.

To protect this colony from accidents it might be liable to, it is, together with its proviſions, enveloped in a ſhell. This covering is ſometimes as hard as a ſtone; great care however is taken to leave an opening. as in nuts, or ſmall holes at the end, covered by a *valve*—by this outlet, the young family find egreſs. Not one ſingle grain is known, but what is in its organiſation, ſuited to this purpoſe.

NOR in advancing this, do I attribute to them a greater degree of intelligence, than is ſeen in other inſects.—The ſpider lays its eggs in a bag, which alſo has its orifice. The ſilk worm ſhuts itſelf up in a pod, of a texture wonderfully compact, except in that part towards the head, which is ſo contrived as to allow it to eſcape from its confinement at the proper time—this precaution is common to all vermicular inſects. But all animals that unite their labours, have infinitely more ingenuity in their proceedings, than thoſe which work individually—theſe, exceed in ingenuity all others—for, while they conſtruct the building, and collect proviſions for the ſupport of the infant colony, leſt the work ſhould be deſtroyed by the birds, or other animals, it is environed with a ſubſtance

ſtance of a nauſeous taſte, as the external coat of walnuts, which is bitter,—or fortified with prickly points, as the ſhell of the cheſnut. Theſe operations of my animalcules originate from the ſame cauſe, which directs the rabbit to dig itſelf a burrough in the earth; the lapwing to ſuſpend its neſt by a few threads; and the duckling to take to the water, before it has ſeen the drake ſwim upon the ſurface. Let us not wonder then that the roſe buſh is armed with prickles, and protected all over, by the ſame means, which the cheſnut has provided for its fruit alone.

THIS defence is commonly ſeen among ſhrubs that grow on the borders of the woods, and are expoſed to the ravages of beaſts that feed there—The ſea ruſh, the bramble, the black and red thorn, the gooſeberry tree, and even the nettle and thiſtle, which grow by the way ſide, are furniſhed with prickly points for their defence. They are in fact to the woods, as frontier towns are to a province.

THE colony once ſupplied with the neceſſary proviſions, have various modes of tranſplanting, or tranſporting themſelves—thoſe ſuſpended aloft in the air, have nothing to do but to ſuffer themſelves to fall down—the fruit drops, and after having rebounded a few times, reſts perhaps thirty paces from the parent tree. And here I muſt remark that thoſe fruits which fall from a great height, are rounder and harder in proportion to their fall—The acorn, the maſt of the fir tree, the cheſnut, the common nut, the pine apple, are in their ſeveral ways protected from the violence of the ſtroke they receive in coming to the ground. Nature having pre-contrived when ſhe raiſed them ſo far above the earth, that their return to it, ſhould not be attended with ill conſequences. On the

the other hand, the artificers of the linden tree, which grows in moiſt and ſwampy grounds, know very well, that ſhould they conſtruct unweildy coverings, their weight would bury them in the ſame place they fell. Wherefore, their ſeed is fixed to a long fibre or feather, with which it is let down by degrees, and carried away by the winds. The willow, which grows in the ſame kind of ſoil, has its tufts of feathers as well as the reed. The ſeeds of the elm, are placed in the midſt of a large follicle or purſe; by means of theſe, which ſerve them as wings, they are tranſported to any diſtance. By the conſtruction of its ſeed, I ſhould be induced to think the elm deſigned for the inhabitant of the valley. We need no longer wonder that the cherry and peach tree riſe but to a middling ſtature. A full grown peach which ſhould fall from the heiget of an elm, would not go far. How then, you will ſay, do thoſe that are mere ſhrubs, ſuch as the blue bell, artichoke, thiſtle, &c. for they cannot roll away from where they lit. I anſwer, that theſe alſo affix their colonies to a kind of wings, and they are then tranſported by the wind. In autumn you may ſee the air full of them. They are ſuſpended with equal induſtry as ingenuity, and however far they travel, the ſeed always falls perpendicularly; and there are ſome ſort of peas with elaſtic ſhells, which when ripe, ſhoot forth their ſeed to the diſtance of ten or twelve feet. Do you now think that a plant is no more than an hydraulic machine?

FURTHER, as the inhabitant of the cheſnut, and other fruits which I have mentioned, protect themſelves from the attacks of the birds—ſo the ſtrawberry, and the raſberry, make their enemies ſubſervient to their purpoſes. The former, are warriors, the latter, politicians. They environ themſelves with a ſubſtance, alluring to the eye and grateful to the taſte.

taſte. The birds feed upon this ſubſtance, and are nouriſhed by it; and by a natural operation, ſow the ſeeds again in the earth. They devour the fruit, but this does not damage the ſeed, which is too hard to be affected by their digeſtive powers. Many other fruits that have ſtones in them, are ſown by the ſame means. This fineſſe is not peculiar to the animals of our hemiſphere. The nutmeg, is a kind of peach, growing in Molucca; its nuts bring in a large revenue to the States of Holland; who, that they may reſerve to themſelves the benefits riſing from it, have endeavoured to deſtroy and eradicate this tree, in the iſlands that do not belong to them; but their attempts are in vain: a particular ſpecies of ſea fowl, ſowing it, ſoon after they have eaten it. Thus weak is man, when he militates againſt nature: a whole nation could not extirpate one ſingle vegetable.

THE King of Pruſſia for the encouragement of population, once gave orders to cut down ſome foreſts, to provide lands for new married people. It was repreſented to him, that this méaſure would occaſion a ſcarcity of timber; to which he made anſwer, "I had much rather have men in my dominions, than trees." Can it be ſuppoſed that the ſovereign ruler of all things, would not rather chuſe for his ſubjects, animate beings, than mere uninformed machines?

WE have ſeen animalculæ moving in the juice of plants—and although they are too minute for us, their various operations are imperceptible to our organs, though aſſiſted by the beſt microſcopes: yet they as certainly labour, act in concert, and perform every thing elſe I have related of them, as the animal inhabitants of the Madrepores, and Litophites —for as theſe are the plants of the ſea, the others are in like manner the Madrepores of the air.

You

You will ſay, they certainly differ in their conſtruction, becauſe the Madrepores do not bear fruit —but this is an opinion rather ſtarted, than to be received. For 'tis to be conſidered, that they live in a fluid, where their fruits can neither fall nor roll; to what end then ſhould they environ the colony with a cumberſome body; or with a lighter ſubſtance, like the wad which ſurrounds the ſeeds, which are to fall in the water.

IT is certain however, that a milky juice has been ſeen in their flowers, like that in the ſeeds of our fruits, which milk is diſperſed in the ſea like the ſpawn of fiſh.

ARTS and manners differ, in different elements; a ſailor and a citizen, are both of them men, but a ſhip and a houſe, are by no means conſtructed alike.

THE little animals, builders of the plants in the air, live in an element which appears to be in perpetual motion,—the moſt gentle zephyr, is to them a hurricane. They have taken the moſt prudent precautions to ſecure the foundations of their edifices, and to tranſport their families without riſk of their being damaged or ſcattered abroad.

THOSE who build in the ſea, live in a fluid, which is not altogether ſo eaſily put in motion; and when once agitated, moves in waves and large maſſes. The drops are not ſo active and penetrating as the globules, of which the air is formed, and which are inceſſantly dilated, and contracted, by different degrees of heat or cold. They do not therefore require to be ſo carefully incloſed, as thoſe ſeeds, which are liable to be ſo eaſily diſſipated. Their milk is beſides of a more viſcous nature, not eaſily diſſolved.

IF

IF the animals of the water, had inhabited a ſtill more ſolid element, for example, the earth; they would not have been expoſed to any ſort of agitation. And it is probable that they would then have had no occaſion to put down roots, to raiſe a ſtem, ſpread out leaves, faſhion flowers, or fabricate fruits, as do thoſe that inhabit the air.

IN confirmation of my aſſertion; the truffle has none of the parts abovementioned, nor has it any uſe for them. To what end ſhould there be flowers on a plant that never ſees the ſun, or roots to a vegetable not expoſed to any ſhock? I have heard many people ſay, they cannot divine by what means the truffle is reproduced: its reviviſcency is in my opinion, effected by the communication of its animalculæ with each other through the interior parts of the ſoil it grows in, where reigns a calm eternal and undiſturbed.—The fluid being tranquil, the communication, cannot but be eaſy—no veſſels are neceſſary, for the little inhabitants may ſwim along in ſafety. One would be almoſt ſorry that the animals of ſo charming a fruit, ſhould be ſo indolent, and of ſuch apparent incapacity: but the endowments of every being, are proportioned to its neceſſities—and man, of all beings the moſt indigent, is at the ſame time the moſt intelligent. 'Tis to be wiſhed indeed, that he were the happieſt; and yet the inhabitants of the truffle, though leſs ſenſible than others, may perhaps be more contented

HAVING accounted I hope, for the ordinary cauſes of vegetation, if you are not yet ſatisfied, I will now ſpeak of its extraordinary productions: and my beſt mode of doing this, will be by anticipating ſuch objections as I think you may probably make to what has been already advanced; and the firſt is one, which you will ſay perhaps, all the laws of hydraulics cannot obviate.—That a young tree, full of ſap, fre-

quently puts forth branches and leaves, without bearing the flowers natural to its ſpecies; but a portion of the roots being cut off by an experienced gardener, it becomes fruitful. Whence is it, that it does not bear, unleſs deprived of a part of its nourriture?—I reply, that thoſe animals which have a ſufficiency or ſuperfluity of proviſions, are not ſollicitous to expatriate themſelves; they ſeek to enlarge the tenements in their preſent occupation; they fabricate wood alone; but no ſooner are their proviſions cut off, than they find it abſolutely neceſſary to ſend from home ſuch part of the inhabitants as can no longer ſubſiſt in the environs.

Your next queſtion will be, why a tree, damaged, by the ſtripping of its bark, or otherways, in the ſpring ſubſequent to the accident, ſhall bear an unuſual number of flowers; afterwards of fruit,—and then die?

IT may indeed ſeem ſtrange, that on the eve of its death, it ſhould be more prolific than formerly; but the reaſon is plain: the inhabitants being aſſembled together to debate on the public calamity, reaſon thus; "A Breach is made which we cannot repair! "our Ramparts and Covered Ways are broken up: "and if we remain here, we muſt periſh by Cold or "Hunger: Let us then depart." They immediately go to work, conſtruct flowers, and take refuge in the fruits: The mother-country thus abandoned, the following year the tree dies.

IT has been ſaid, that in every ſeed, there is an entire plant with its ſeeds alſo, which contain ſtill future plants; and they again their ſeeds, and ſo on *ad infinitum*; but this exceeds my powers of comprehenſion: for there muſt be a certain degree of gra-

gradation, wherein the matter is no longer ſuſceptible of form; form being no more than the bounds or limits of matter. If it were otherwiſe, there would be as much matter in an acorn as in an oak; and if it has the principal forms only of the oak, the queſtion is, where are thoſe that it has not, and that are equally eſſential to, and equally conſtituent parts of, the oak in its mature ſtate, as thoſe which are retained?

THE reaſon of any of the forms being left out, can only be for want of room; the ſpace of the ſecond being much leſs, the number of forms muſt be again diminiſhed. And as every decreaſing magnitude muſt neceſſarily come at laſt to nothing; and theſe imaginary glands are continually diminiſhing, there muſt of conſequence a period arrive, when the race of oaks would be extinct and at an end. Yet this is the hypotheſis upon which the generality of people reaſon, when they would account for the cauſes of vegetation.

WHEN I have been talking upon this ſubject, ſome of my friends have profeſſed themſelves from motives of compaſſion, unwilling to believe the exiſtence of theſe animalculæ: Can it be poſſible, ſay they, that myriads of Beings ſhould be created, to be deſtroyed, merely for the ſuſtenance or pleaſure of mankind? And that, were my opinion a juſt one, they would rather continue in error than give their aſſent to ſo cruel a truth. But I can ſee no reaſon why we ſhould reject any ſyſtem for compaſſion's ſake. Anatomiſts have no ſuch ſcruples when they form a ſyſtem, every thing that comes in their way falls a victim to the knife. An Engliſh Gentleman, once cauſed a great number of bitches, big with young, to be opened, for the diſcovery of the laws of generation;—but he did not gain the information he ſought

ſought after. Others have been mentioned, and very juſtly condemned by Monſieur Voltaire, for having taken out the bowels of a living dog, to ſhew the ſpectators the lacteal veins. I would by no means encourage the practice of ſuch barbarous experiments; but my ſyſtem does not affect the life of the animals, whoſe exiſtence it is meant to prove. For as they are too minute to become the objects of viſion, ſo neither can they be affected by our powers of digeſtion.

FINIS.